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Lakeside Literature Series

BOOK III

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IN STORY AND SONG

EDITED BY

WILLIAM ADAMS

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Myths of Old Greece—1-6
E-P 6

PREFACE.

The first two books of this Series were devoted to fables and fairy tales as the simplest forms of story. The present volume, No. III., is intended as a child's introduction to classical mythology. In writing it, two points were kept constantly in mind: first, that it should present the stories essentially according to the traditions; next, that it should have some of the spirit of the old Greek and Latin myths.

At the same time, care has been taken not to burden the pupils. The book is distinctively a reader. It demands no committing to memory, and there is very little to be carried on from story to story. Unessential names and incidents, though necessary in a compendium, are here omitted, and it is thought that the stories will require little more mental labor than that of the mere reading.

In the telling, an attempt has been made to approach the original tales as they may have existed in the mouths of the people. Embellishments have been introduced after the manner of the fairy-tale, and the plots have been shortened and simplified. There have been some omissions, also, to suit the immaturity of the pupils, but none have been made without careful consideration, and

it is believed that the effect of the stories is never inconsistent with the fuller originals of literature.

The Greek accounts of the early history of the world, like the Roman ones, are incomplete and contradictory among themselves, and if in any detail of our rendering we have invented a significance whose existence it would not be easy to warrant as classic, it is hoped that the judicious will still not disapprove of the use made of the material on the subject.

The poetry selected for this, as for the other books of the series, is suitable to the prose. As far as it was practicable, the poems are given in full, but a few fragmentary passages of beauty and interest are also included.

After consideration, it seemed best not to indicate pronunciation in the body of the book. Instead, an index of the proper names has been placed at the end.

For copyright selections in this volume, acknowledgements are due as follows: to Messrs. D. Appleton & Co., publishers of Bryant's complete works, for permission to use the selection from "The Greek Boy"; to Messrs. Houghton, Mifflin & Co., the only authorized publishers of Longfellow's works, for permission to use the selection from "Pegasus in Pound."

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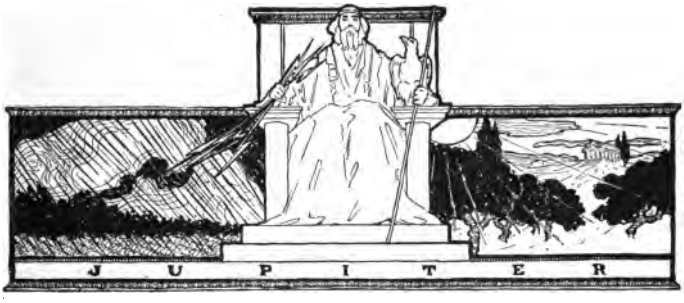
SPIRITS OF THE WOOD.



THE GODS.

Far away across the sea from us lies the pleasant land of Greece. It is a beautiful country, full of wooded hills and green valleys; and the blue sea comes far inland, up the valleys between the hills, and meets the little rivers and the noisy brooks. Many of our garden flowers grow wild on the Grecian meadows, for the air is fresh and moist, and even the winters are not cold.

A long while ago there lived in that land the happiest and brightest nation

that the world has known. In those days men did not think of things as we do. The Greeks felt that everything was alive. The air was full of fairies and gods; the spring of fresh water gurgled because it was happy; and each river had in it a great, quiet water-god. When the farmer sowed the seeds in the field, it was a goddess that made the green stalks come up and be fruitful. The trees of the forest also had each a fair spirit; and to one who understood, the rustling of the leaves spoke with meaning. Even the old Earth was not dead. The earthquakes proved that she could move, if she would.

Down under the earth, where the sun never shines, the Greeks thought that there was another world. It, too, had its gods and its spirits. Dreams lived there, and the ghosts of men who had died, or who had not yet been born.

But the gods the Greeks loved most

were the gods of the sky. They were beautiful and happy and kind. When the Sun drove his flaming chariot from his palace in the East, the Greeks seemed to hear the Earth and the Waters laugh with joy.

It was a god of the sky who brought the rain in great bags, called clouds, to pour it upon the thirsty Earth. It was these gods, too, who helped men to do whatever was beautiful and brave and useful. They made men merry and mischievous and clever and happy.

The king and father of the gods of the sky was Jupiter. It was he who gave fair weather and foul. It was he who came in the thundercloud and hurled the lightning down upon those who had done him wrong. The eagle which soared above the clouds was his bird, and sometimes was seen carrying his thunderbolts.

If Jupiter but nodded his head, all

creation shook with a muttering of thunder; yet, great as he was, he would sometimes come down from the sky and walk on earth as a man. He wished to see and enjoy things himself. At any moment, however, he might disappear to return to Olympus, where the gods of heaven lived.

He was not the only one who was thus seen. All of the gods and goddesses showed themselves at times on earth, and they were very much like men and women, even on Olympus. They ate, and drank, and were married, like people of the earth, and we are told that they often quarreled outrageously among themselves.

They had few cares. They would even leave Olympus for days together, to make a visit somewhere, and the world would move on without them, just as usual. Happy, beautiful, careless Olympus!

HELLAS.

Land of bards and heroes, hail!
  Land of gods and godlike men,
Thine were hearts that could not quail,—
  Earth was glorious then;
Thine were souls that dared be free;
Power, and fame, and liberty.

Land where every vale and mountain
  Echoes to immortal strains,
Light is round thy stream and fountain,
  Light on all thy plains.
Never shall thy glory set;
Thou shalt be our beacon yet.

JAMES GATES PERCIVAL.

Gone are the glorious Greeks of old,
  Glorious in mien and mind;
Their bones are mingled with the mould,
  Their dust is on the wind;
The forms they hewed from living stone
Survive the waste of years, alone,
And, scattered with their ashes, show
What greatness perished long ago.

WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT.

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PROSERPINA.

Jupiter was called the father of the gods, but he was not the father of them all. He had a brother, Neptune, who ruled the ocean, and another brother, Pluto, who ruled the underworld; and Ceres was one of his sisters. She was the stately and beautiful goddess who made the fields grow green and yield their crops.

Nowadays, men must work hard and take much care if they will have large harvests, but we are told that in early times this was not so. Ceres kept the earth fertile, and there was no winter. When

one crop was taken in, another began to sprout.

Ceres took care also to have the flowers always blooming. This she did because she had a fair young daughter, Proserpina, who loved them. Never was a mother happier than Ceres as she watched Proserpina wandering through the fields with blossoms tucked in her golden hair and in the folds of her white gown, and with her hands and arms full of violets and lilies.

Of all places in the world, Proserpina loved most the valley of Enna. Here there was a clear lake, and about it green meadows and cool groves. Upon the lake floated white swans; in the groves sang choirs of birds, all day long; and above the meadows soared the lark.

While Ceres went about the world from end to end, looking after the fields of wheat and rye and barley, Proserpina would spend the day wandering in the valley of Enna, watching the

swans, listening to the birds, and gathering flowers with her friends the water-nymphs.

It happened that upon a certain day there was strife between Jupiter and some great earth creatures called Titans. The noise of fighting was so loud that it disturbed even the world under the earth.

When the strife was at an end, Pluto, the king of the underworld, came up to see what damage had been done; for he feared that the earth might have been so harmed that the sun would shine through into his kingdom.

As he drove along the earth in his black chariot, he passed the valley of Enna and saw Proserpina playing in the meadow with the nymphs. Pluto hated the light and was blinking his eyes a good deal, but he had no need to see well to make out that Proserpina was fair and charming. He stopped his four terrible black horses and looked again. He had

never seen anything so beautiful in heaven, or on earth, or under the earth. The grim, rough old god was in love with gentle Proserpina. He turned his black horses and drove slowly down the valley toward her.

The maidens did not see him until he was near. Then one of the nymphs glanced up and gave a great shriek. All turned and saw the four great black horses and the black chariot, and the dark face of Pluto who drove.

The nymphs fled and disappeared in the lake; but Proserpina, with her arms full of flowers, stood looking with wonder at the approaching god. Before she could even turn, the chariot was beside her. Without drawing rein, Pluto caught her up in his arms, and in a moment they were driving like mad across the fields. Then, indeed, Proserpina was frightened. She shrieked and called for her mother, but Ceres was far away, in Spain, caring for the crops of rye and

barley and seeing that they ripened as they should.

Gruff old Pluto tried to comfort the goddess-child. He told her that she should be his bride and queen; that she should have all the underworld bow down before her, and that no one should treat her unkindly, since he loved her. He told her that the underworld was black and beautiful, like the night, and that it was rich with sparkling gold and jewels. But Proserpina was afraid of his dark face. She kept weeping, and would not be comforted.

All this time they were rushing over hills and valleys and across rivers and lakes. The terrible black horses hardly touched the earth or the waters. At last, when they came near the fountain of Arethusa, Pluto struck the earth with his spear. A great hole gaped before them, and, with a cry, Proserpina felt herself sinking, and falling down into the dark.

When they reached solid ground again, they were in a new world. The air was cool and close, and all the light they had was so faint that it was scarcely light at all.

Proserpina could see nothing at first, but Pluto gave a sigh of contentment, for his eyes were used only to this. Soon the poor little goddess, who was to be queen of this awful kingdom, began to see better. High above, she could make out something like a cloudy sky arched over the whole region. It was the earth, through which they had come; for the sun never shines in the underworld, and there are no stars there. Far away, across the plain, she could see great masses of towers and palaces; but there was not a plant nor a tree in all that land, and the only flowers were the few faded ones she had not let fall when the grim god seized her.

"I hope you will like it here," said Pluto, as they drove on. "It is very

pleasant, and you shall have all the gold and jewels you wish. You shall sit beside me on my throne, and wear a crown sparkling with diamonds."

"But I don't want to live here in the dark," cried Proserpina, weeping afresh.

Then Pluto looked sullen, and said that most persons were not unwilling to be queens and wear crowns of diamonds. He thought she was foolish to make such an ado about the darkness. To his mind, sunlight was unbearable, and he felt sure that it was very bad, indeed, for the eyes.

Just then they passed a great river, and Proserpina listened to hear the music of the water, for that was a sound she loved. But the murmur was not like that of earthly rivers. Somehow it made her shudder and shrink back, for it seemed to be all of sighs and groans.

"That is the river Styx," said Pluto. "All who die must pass it. Look!"

Proserpina looked, and saw upon the

torpid stream a boat. It was laden down with the souls of men. In the stern she could make out Charon, the grim ferryman, with his long, white beard and hair, and in his hand the great oar with which he was rowing the boat across.

It was a sad sight, and Proserpina was relieved when Pluto said:—

"Come, now we shall see Cerberus, my dog."

Even as he spoke, they heard a barking that seemed to echo through the whole underworld. It was such a noise that Proserpina thought it must be a pack of monsters, all howling; but soon she saw Cerberus himself. He was larger than any horse, and he had three heads, all of which were barking at once. Proserpina shuddered, but Pluto stopped to pat the great beast on its three heads.

"Do not be afraid of him," said Pluto, smiling. "He will harm no one who has the right to pass him."

But Proserpina could not even look at him.

So they passed on. All the land was full of gloom, and was as quiet as a land of ghosts must be. Even Elysium, the place where men lived who had been brave and good on earth, Proserpina thought was sad. All the jewels and riches of the world could not make this little goddess happy without sunshine and flowers and fresh air and the blue sky.

At last, they reached Pluto's palace. It was rich beyond anything ever seen on earth.

There were columns, all of gold, and statues of rare beauty, made each of one precious stone; there were flowers made of jewels, and birds which seemed to fly: but all was dead, and the only sweet live creature in the palace was the poor little goddess Proserpina, who seemed like a sunbeam gone astray; and, indeed, for all his talk, Pluto thought her look and the light she brought with her worth

more than all the treasures of his underworld; and from that day, though she was always a little sad, and though she would eat nothing and often wept for her mother, Proserpina made the grim old palace seem a very different place, and Pluto grew almost cheerful.

Meanwhile, Ceres came back to the valley of Enna with its sunny meadows. It was a lonely place that day when she returned. The birds had stopped singing since Proserpina was gone, and the only sound Ceres heard was a faint sobbing from the edge of the lake, where one of the poor little nymphs lay weeping for her lost playmate. She was terrified as she heard the footsteps of the great goddess. Yet she was able to tell the news. Proserpina had been carried off by some one in a black chariot. The nymphs had all cried out, but there was no help at hand and they had seen their beautiful goddess-friend no more.

When Ceres heard that, her face grew very stern and terrible. She set out at once to find her child and to punish him who had dared to do such a deed. But, although she moved swiftly, she saw no trace of the lost maiden until, at nightfall, she picked up a rose which had fallen from the hands of the poor frightened goddess and which was already faded.

The world soon grew dark, but Ceres would not rest. She took two great pine trees, bound them together, and lit them at the volcano of Ætna. With this tremendous torch to light her way, she wandered all through the night, seeking and calling in vain. As often as she met a spirit of sleep, or of dreams, she would stop it and ask, "Have you seen my daughter, Proserpina?" But none of the spirits of night had seen her.

When morning came, she still went on without rest. At each river she would stop and call. Very soon the river-god

CERES SEARCHING FOR PROSERPINA.

would raise his great, dripping head above the water and look at her with gentle, majestic eyes, and she would ask, "Have you seen my daughter, Proserpina?" But none of the river-gods had seen her.

Once, when she came to a hilly forest, she called, "Pan! Pan!" and Pan, the god of the animals, came skipping to meet her. He was like a man, but he had hoofs in place of feet, and his ears were pointed and furry. Besides that, he had two little stubby horns upon his forehead. When he spoke, his voice was like the whinny of a horse, or the cry of some wild creature; and yet it was a man's voice. Altogether it was a strange, uncanny sound, and when Pan shouted, he could make a whole army of brave men run helter-skelter without any other cause.

Truly, a wild being was Pan; but when Ceres called, he hurried to meet her, stamping with his hard little hoofs, and

bounding over the rocks and the streams of water. But though Pan was a great god, he could not tell what had become of Proserpina.

A day passed, and another, and another; still Ceres could not find her child. She traveled over the earth from end to end, in vain. Of Proserpina she found not another trace.

During all this time, she had not once thought of her usual cares. None of the newly-planted fields were sprouting, and the crops which had begun to grow were withering. Then all the farmers called on the goddess for help, praying to her to pity the land and care for its vegetation. But Ceres thought only of her lost child, and day by day the land grew more bare. The leaves fell from the trees, and the hills became yellow and barren. Then the North Wind rushed down upon the country, bringing hail and frost and snow; for Ceres said, "Not one blade of grass, nor a leaf nor flower, shall the Earth

yield until my daughter is found." So the farmers stayed within doors, and shivered and waited. Sometimes, in the nights, they could see in the sky the glow of her great torch, where the mighty goddess wandered alone, searching; and, when the storms were worst, they could sometimes hear her voice calling, "Proserpina."

Many weeks passed thus, but at last, when the goddess was near to despair, she came to the fountain of Arethusa. This fountain came up from the very bottom of the earth, and Arethusa, the nymph who lived in it, could go down when she pleased and look into the underworld.

It was a chilly day. There was a rim of ice about the edge of the water, and Arethusa was far down in the earth below. But at the call of Ceres she came up quickly and raised her beautiful face and dripping hair above the surface.

"Have you seen my daughter, Proser-

pina?" asked Ceres. She had asked that question many, many times, in vain, during these last months.

"Was she young, and slender, and beautiful? Were her eyes blue, and her locks golden? And did she wear violets and lilies in her hair and dress?"

"Tell me what you know of her!" cried Ceres.

Then Arethusa told of the black horses and chariot and the grim driver she had seen; and how the fierce, dark god had struck the earth with his spear, and how the earth had opened and swallowed him up, chariot, black horses, maiden, and all.

"And to-day, in the underworld, I saw her again. She was seated upon a great black throne, beside the dark-faced god. Upon her head was a glittering crown of diamonds and rubies, and she wore the dark robe of royalty. All the ghosts of those who are dead, and all the monsters and terrible spirits of the underworld,

came and bowed before her and were her subjects; but her face was pale, and they say she has never been known to smile, nor will she eat anything."

When Ceres heard that, she covered her face, and for a whole day sat speechless with grief, for she knew that the dark god was Pluto, the ruler of the underworld, and that she could do nothing against his mighty power.

At last, she uncovered her face and rose, and went slowly up the path of stars to Olympus, where the gods of heaven dwell; for, she said, "My brother Jupiter, alone, can help me now."

When she came to Olympus, the great gates opened to her of themselves; and when she entered the glorious hall, the gods and goddesses of heaven rose in courtesy to her, for Ceres was reverenced by all. Then they sat down again at the long table, where they were eating and drinking. Ah, but it was a beautiful sight! A glow of light and joy was over

all of them, and their faces shone with happiness and power.

At the head of the table sat Jupiter, father of gods and of men. His face was thoughtful and calm; but whether he smiled or frowned, it was always beautiful and majestic, like the sky. At his right sat Juno, the stately goddess-queen, in a robe of dazzling white, and with golden sandals; at his left sat Minerva, goddess of truth and wisdom, clear-eyed and quiet and terribly strong. It was to these three that Ceres looked; and as she moved across the glorious hall, the gods ceased their smiling and became earnest, for they saw how the great earth-goddess was grieving.

But Ceres spoke aloud to Jupiter and said, "O Jupiter, Father of Gods and Men, grant me justice! Compel Pluto to give me my daughter again, for he took her from me by force."

Then Jupiter bowed his head in thought, and Minerva, the goddess of wisdom, said,

"If Proserpina has eaten anything in the underworld, she cannot return; but if not, Jupiter may right the wrong."

Then Ceres said, "Nothing shall grow upon the earth—neither tree, nor flower, nor blade of grass—until Proserpina comes back. Choose what you will do!"

When she had said this, Ceres turned and left Olympus. She went back to the earth and sat silent and alone, with covered head, mourning for her daughter.

But on Olympus Jupiter sat long in thought. At last he called his messenger, the god Mercury, who is quickest and cleverest among the dwellers of Olympus. Him he sent down to the underworld with messages to Pluto.

Now Mercury has winged sandals on his feet and a winged cap upon his head, and he sails through the air more swiftly than any bird. Besides, he has a magic wand with two snakes twisted about it, and with this wand he can

control even the ghosts of the underworld.

When Mercury had received the order of Jupiter, he hurried out of Olympus and came swiftly down to earth. The earth opened at touch of the magic wand, and the messenger of Jupiter went through it without stopping, straight down to the palace of Pluto.

That day, as Ceres was sitting alone in her grief, she heard a sound that startled her. It was a little bird in the tree above her, singing a few clear notes of joy.

"What does this mean?" thought Ceres.

Then she looked across the fields and saw that all the trees were putting forth their leaves, and the grass was sprouting up, making the meadows green.

"Have I not said that nothing shall grow upon the earth?" said Ceres, in wonder. "Who has done this?"

Then suddenly the meadows seemed to

burst into flower, and grow beautiful with blossoms of crocus and hyacinth and anemone and narcissus; and whole choirs of birds broke out into jubilant songs in the groves.

Then Ceres saw some one coming toward her across the meadows—a slender, beautiful goddess, with flowers in her golden hair and in the folds of her fair, white gown; and this young goddess had a smile on her lips, and her eyes were as bright and blue as the skies in spring. It was Proserpina, coming to meet her mother. And Ceres, in her joy, wept and laughed at the same time, as she took her daughter in her arms. That day the reign of happiness began again over all the earth.

Yet Proserpina could not stay with her mother always. While she was in the underworld she had tasted a pomegranate which Pluto had offered her. Because of this, she had to spend a part of each year ever after with her grim lover in the underworld.

But Ceres always mourns until Proserpina returns. And she allows nothing to grow upon the earth until the fair young goddess comes back. The men of earth have given the evil season a name, and have called it Winter; but Pluto and the other dwellers in the underworld think it the best of all seasons, for only during those months do they have their beautiful queen in their midst.

PERSEPHONE.

She stepped upon Sicilian grass,
  Demeter's daughter, fresh and fair,
A child of light, a radiant lass,
  And gamesome as the morning air.
  The daffodils were fair to see,
  They nodded lightly on the lea,
  Persephone—Persephone!

Lo! one she marked of rarer growth
  Than orchis or anemone:
For it the maiden left them both,
  And parted from her company.
  Drawn nigh she deemed it fairer still,
  And stooped to gather by the rill
  The daffodil, the daffodil.

What ailed the meadow that it shook?
  What ailed the air of Sicily?
She wondered by the brattling brook
  And trembled with the trembling lea.
  "The coal-black horses rise—they rise.
  O mother, mother!" low she cries—
  Persephone—Persephone!

"O light, light, light!" she cries, "farewell;
The coal-black horses wait for me.
O shade of shades, where I must dwell,
Demeter, mother, far from thee!
Ah, fated doom that I fulfill!
Ah, fateful flower beside the rill!
The daffodil, the daffodil!"

What ails her that she comes not home?
Demeter seeks her far and wide,
And gloomy-browed doth ceaseless roam
From many a morn till eventide.
"My life, immortal though it be,
Is naught," she cries, "for want of thee,
Persephone—Persephone!

"Meadows of Enna, let the rain
No longer drop to feed your rills,
Nor dew refresh the fields again,
With all their nodding daffodils!
Fade, fade and droop, O lilied lea,
Where thou, dear heart, were reft from me—
Persephone—Persephone!"

She reigns upon her dusky throne,
'Mid shades of heroes dread to see;

Among the dead she breathes alone,
Persephone—Persephone!
Or seated on the Elysian hill
She dreams of earthly daylight still,
And murmurs of the daffodil.

A voice in Hades soundeth clear,
The shadows mourn and flit below;
It cries—"Thou Lord of Hades, hear,
And let Demeter's daughter go.
The tender corn upon the lea
Droops in her goddess gloom when she
Cries for her lost Persephone.

"From land to land she raging flies,
The green fruit falleth in her wake,
And harvest fields beneath her eyes
To earth the grain unripened shake.
Arise, and set the maiden free;
Why should the world such sorrow dree
By reason of Persephone?"

He takes the cleft pomegranate seeds:
"Love, eat with me this parting day;"
Then bids them fetch the coal-black steeds—
"Demeter's daughter, wouldst away?"

The gates of Hades set her free;
"She will return full soon," saith he—
"My wife, my wife Persephone."

Low laughs the dark king on his throne—
"I gave her of pomegranate seeds."
Demeter's daughter stands alone
Upon the fair Eleusian meads.
Her mother meets her. "Hail!" saith she;
"And doth our daylight dazzle thee
My love, my child Persephone?

"What moved thee, daughter, to forsake
Thy fellow-maids that fatal morn,
And give thy dark lord power to take
Thee living to his realm forlorn?"
Her lips reply without her will,
As one addressed who slumbereth still—
"The daffodil, the daffodil!"

Her eyelids droop with light oppressed,
And sunny wafts that round her stir,
Her cheek upon her mother's breast—
Demeter's kisses comfort her.
Calm Queen of Hades, art thou she
Who stepped so lightly on the lea—
Persephone, Persephone?

When, in her destined course, the moon
  Meets the deep shadow of this world,
And laboring on doth seem to swoon
  Through awful wastes of dimness whirled—
  Emerged at length, no trace hath she
  Of that dark hour of destiny,
  Still silvery sweet—Persephone.

The greater world may near the less,
  And draw it through her weltering shade,
But not one biding trace impress
  Of all the darkness that she made;
  The greater soul that draweth thee
  Hath left his shadow plain to see
  On thy fair face, Persephone!

Demeter sighs, but sure 'tis well
  The wife should love her destiny:
They part, and yet, as legends tell,
  She mourns her lost Persephone;
  While chant the maids of Enna still—
  "O fateful flower beside the rill—
  The daffodil, the daffodil."

JEAN INGELOW.

PROMETHEUS AND EPIMETHEUS.

From the time when Proserpina was carried off, the world began to be less happy than it had been. In the winter men shivered and froze, and even the summer had its cares, for in the warmest and fairest days men were busy saving stores for the winter which was to come.

In those days there lived in the world a race of great creatures called Titans. They were children of old Mother Earth, who is so quiet under our feet, and they were bold and strong. They did not fear Jupiter himself, and once they piled

mountain upon mountain and tried to force a way into Olympus, to cast the king of the gods out of it. Jupiter, with all his thunderbolts, was not entirely secure at that time.

Among the Titans, two were special friends of man—Prometheus and his brother, Epimetheus. Prometheus was the braver and stronger of the two. When he saw men suffer in the winter months, he at once began to consider what could be done for them. First he taught them to build houses and barns, and to store up grain for their own use and fodder for their flocks. Then he taught them to watch the stars, for by the stars the coming of winter can be foretold and men can be ready for it.

After that men were more comfortable, but up to this time they knew nothing of the uses of fire and they shivered sadly on cold days. Prometheus was wiser than they. He had seen the eternal fire burning in the great hall of Olympus,

where the gods of heaven dwell, and he knew how it cheers and warms those who have it. He knew also that the fire was sacred, and that Jupiter did not wish it to be touched, but Prometheus was a Titan and feared not Jupiter, nor obeyed him.

One night, when the gods of heaven were all asleep and the hall of Olympus was empty, Prometheus climbed quietly up the star-road to the home of the gods, and slipped three burning coals of the fire into a hollow reed he had brought with him. Then he strode out, laughing and stamping his feet in defiance.

When Jupiter saw the smoke rising from cozy homes all over the world, and heard men singing rough chants in honor of Prometheus, who had stolen fire from heaven, he grew very stern.

"Prometheus is brave, but he has done wrong to steal the sacred fire," said Jupiter, "and he must be punished."

Then Jupiter sent two monstrous ser-

vants of his, who took Prometheus and bound him to the side of a great cliff. There the great Titan hung, with the storm and the sunshine beating upon him. Every day an eagle came and fed upon him, and every night his body was healed again, but with great pain, and his suffering was always terrible.

He saw, too, that the fire he had stolen was not entirely a blessing. Though it was warming and useful, it seemed to make men proud and angry of temper. They had begun to fight one another. At times they burned each other's houses and crops with the sacred fire, and they melted ores in it to make swords of steel and armor of brass to use against one another. Men were more comfortable, but they were not happier than before, for after that day when Prometheus brought down the fire, the world was never again quite at peace.

All this Epimetheus saw, and it grieved him deeply. At last, one day, an idea

came to him and he went to the cliff where Prometheus hung.

"Listen, brother," he said to the great suffering Titan. "For all your pains and mine, men are little better off than they were."

"I know it well," said Prometheus in his suffering. "Even here the noise and clash of war comes to my ears. Men are strong and brave and proud, but how can they ever be happy?"

Then Epimetheus said, "I will help them. I will go to Jupiter and be friends with him. Not by force, but by gentleness, will I bring down the joy of Olympus; and men shall have it."

But Prometheus said, "Do it not. Happiness is for the gods. The gifts of Olympus will harm men. Let the world alone."

Epimetheus said no more, but his mind was not changed. Next day he went up the star-road and into the great hall of Olympus, where the gods of heaven were

feasting. The air was sweet with the fragrance of the ambrosia they eat and the nectar they drink. Music was sounding, and there was a warm radiance filling the hall with happy daylight.

Epimetheus was dazzled for a moment. Then he went forward and knelt at the feet of Jupiter.

"O King of Gods and of Men," he said, "let there be peace between the Titans and you. Help us, and help mankind, who suffer."

"Speak," said Jupiter. "What is it that you wish?"

"Give me some gift for men, O Jupiter!" answered Epimetheus, bravely. "Let them have some of the joy of Olympus."

Jupiter thought long, but at last he spoke.

"It is an unwise wish, O Epimetheus! And yet it may be done. Go back to earth. To-morrow the gift shall be yours."

So Epimetheus left Olympus, glad and thankful at heart.

Then Jupiter turned to Vulcan and said:—

"Make a box to hold the gift, and make for me a bearer to carry it."

Now Vulcan is the workman of the gods. He is lame, but skillful, and with his hands he makes wondrous things. So when Jupiter had said these words, the lame god hobbled away to his workshop.

Soon he came back with a rich and wonderful box, as Jupiter had ordered; and when each god of heaven had put within it a gift, he closed the lid and shut the rare blessings safely in.

Then he took clay and formed of it a woman, warm and alive and human. He called to his aid Venus, the goddess of love, to add beauty to the form, and Minerva, the wise goddess, to make the woman intelligent, and thus each of the gods, in turn, gave her something, so that Pandora, as she was called, was perfect

beyond all women born on earth, though she was only an earthly woman after all.

When this was done, Jupiter smiled and said to Mercury, the messenger of the gods:—

"Take this woman and this box. They are gifts of the gods to Epimetheus, and to mankind; but the box must never be opened. Let them take heed, for the joys of heaven will work evil if they are set free on earth."

So Mercury put on his winged sandals and his winged hat, took Pandora by the hand, and led her away.

Next morning Epimetheus heard a knock at his door. He knew that it was the messenger of the gods, but he was slow to open, for he thought of what Prometheus had said of the danger. He almost made up his mind not to take the gift; then he opened the door.

There stood Pandora, more beautiful than any woman of earth, and in her arm rested the box, which shone and

sparkled as if it were a living thing. And whether it was Pandora, or the box, it seemed to Epimetheus that there was the music and fragrance and light of heaven come to his door, and he welcomed them eagerly, forgetting the danger.

So Mercury led Pandora in; but before he left, he warned Pandora and Epimetheus not to open the sacred box. "The gifts of heaven must not be set free on earth," he said, "for men are not strong enough to receive them." Then, with a wave of his snake-wand and a whir of the wings on his feet and head, he disappeared.

Then came happy days. Epimetheus invited every one to come to get good of the divine gift, and men came from all parts of the earth. Some were young and some were old; but all those who saw Pandora and came near to the wondrous box, felt a change in themselves. When they left the house of Epimetheus, they were surprised to find how beautiful the sky was, with its white clouds; they

PANDORA AND THE WONDERFUL BOX.

wondered at the songs of the birds, which seemed new and strange; and they felt ready to die for what is good and true. Ah, the wonderful box!

Then, first, men began to sing and to dance, to paint and to make beautiful statues, and to write stories and poems in praise of the gods, and of the heroes who fought to kill monsters and savage beasts. All mankind seemed then, for the first time, to be free and happy. Even Jupiter and the gods of heaven had more joy as they saw how the earth prospered and how their altars were smoking with sacrifices.

And of all the world, the spot most blessed was the home of Epimetheus. There stood the wonderful box, and Pandora would sit by the hour with her ear against it, listening to the faint music that seemed to come from within it, taking in all the glory and joy which poured through the sparkling sides and top. "What a marvelous box!" she would say to herself. "What joy it has brought

the world! I wonder—I wonder what it is that the gods put into it to give it such power."

One day she said to Epimetheus, "Would it be wrong, do you think, to raise the lid, just for a moment, to see what is inside? What do you suppose can make those strange, sweet sounds we hear in it sometimes?"

But Epimetheus answered, sternly, "Do not dare to open it, Pandora, for the gods have forbidden it!"

Pandora was silent, but she could not help thinking of the box. It was in her mind day and night. "If it does so much good to mankind when it is closed, who knows what will happen if it is opened?" she thought to herself. "Maybe the blessing will be doubled. Who knows?"

Day by day she grew to love the beautiful box more, and day by day she was more eager to know what was in it!

"Maybe there is some god imprisoned

there, waiting for some one who will be brave enough to raise the lid," she would think. "What evil can there be in so blessed a box? It has made the whole world happy. It must be good."

Then she would think that even though she should raise the lid just a little—just enough to look in—there could be no great harm done. She wanted only a glimpse. She would close it again so quickly that nothing could escape.

At last, one day, the charm was too great to resist, and she found herself grasping the lid with both hands, ready to raise it. Then she came to her senses and let it go. "I must not do it," she thought. And then she knelt down beside the box and began to raise up the cover, with eyes eager to look in as soon as the crack should be wide enough.

Suddenly it opened and something struck her in the face and burned like a spark of fire. Pandora started back with a cry, and in a moment the lid of the

box opened wide, of itself, and a cloud of black and golden creatures came swarming out and away.

In another moment Pandora had hold of the lid and was trying to close it, but it was of no use. The little creatures were stronger than she. At last she sprang upon the cover, with her whole weight. That closed it, but it was too late then.

When Epimetheus came back he found her there, kneeling upon the lid of the box and weeping. It was long before she could tell what had happened. Then, for many hours, they sat without a word to say. What good could come of talking? The evil was done.

Next day it was even worse, for men came from the cities round about and told how things were going wrong. Almost everyone was in some trouble. Sickness and crime had broken out on every side, and had changed happy cities into places of utter misery.

"What has caused all this woe?" they

would ask Epimetheus; and Pandora would answer, "I have done it, for I let out the spirits from the box."

"Can nothing be done?" they would ask. "It would be better not to live, than to live in this misery."

But as they talked and could find no help, suddenly Pandora gave a cry of joy.

"They are not all gone!" she said, eagerly, putting her ear to the box. "Listen!"

Sure enough, from within the box came a sound of the sweetest, softest music. It was the spirit that was called Hope. Those who heard it felt that life was good after all, for with all their troubles they could be brave and strong while hope remained.

After that Pandora never opened the box again, but life on earth was not simple or easy. The world was full of evil and sickness and sorrow; yet men came from all parts of the earth, and when they heard the music of that imprisoned spirit, they took heart and lived better.

SONG OF A HYPERBOREAN.

I come from a land in the sun-bright deep,
Where golden gardens grow;
Where the winds of the north, becalm'd in sleep,
Their conch-shells never blow.

So near the track of the stars are we,
That oft, on night's pale beams,
The distant sounds of their harmony
Come to our ears, like dreams.

The Moon, too, brings her world so nigh,
That when the night-seer looks
To that shadowless orb, in a vernal sky
He can number its hills and brooks.

To the Sun-god all our hearts and lyres
By day, by night, belong;
And the breath we draw from his living fires,
We give him back in song.

From us descends the maid who brings
To Delos gifts divine;
And our wild bees lend their rainbow wings
To glitter on Delphi's shrine.

THOMAS MOORE.

APOLLO AND DAPHNE.

One beautiful morning Cupid, the little winged god of love, sat busily polishing his bow and his arrows. Some of his arrows were tipped with gold, and some with lead, but he polished all alike and saw to it that they were neatly winged with white dove-feathers. Then he put them back into his quiver, taking care not to prick himself, for the golden arrows would make even a god fall in love and the leaden ones caused hate. Next, Cupid took up his little bow and saw that the string was unworn and

the golden arch bright and elastic and strong.

At that moment Apollo, the god of light and song, came by. He was just from the earth, where he had done a great service to mankind. For the swamps of Greece had produced a monstrous serpent, called Python, which laid waste the land and slew the people of it. In vain did heroes fight against Python. All were destroyed, and at last the whole land prayed to the gods for aid in its peril. Then Apollo took his mighty and terrible bow and with his arrows slew the beast. Now as he was returning, he saw Cupid polishing and preparing his tiny arms. He stopped, and watched the little god with contempt.

"Are bows and arrows fit weapons for children?" he said. "Leave such weapons to me, who know how to use them. I have slain Python with my darts, but what can you do with yours?"

The little god did not like the words of the great archer.

"I can shoot you, Apollo," said he, "and I will, too."

But Apollo laughed scornfully.

"You had better lay aside the bow, lest some evil befall you, child. Stick to your lamp, with which you fry the hearts of foolish mortals."

With these words he walked away, leaving Cupid almost in tears with rage.

Next day, as Apollo was wandering through the forests of Arcadia, he chanced to see the beautiful nymph Daphne, who was about to set out for the hunt. Daphne was a daughter of the river-god Peneüs, and though she was as fair as the moon on a summer evening, she had never had a lover. She worshipped Diana, the goddess of maidenhood and hunting, and spent all her days chasing the deer. As Apollo saw her moving gracefully and swiftly among the trees, he said to himself that he had never seen a lighter step or a more winning face.

At that very moment Cupid was string-

ing his bow behind the shelter of a neighboring thicket. He took two shining arrows from his quiver, one tipped with gold and one with lead. First he drew the golden arrow to its head; the bow gave a vicious little twang, and in a moment the arrow had sunk deep into the breast of Apollo. The god felt the pang and put his hand to his heart, but it was too late: he was madly in love with beautiful Daphne. He called to her, "Stay, Daphne."

But as Daphne turned to see who called, Cupid sent the leaden arrow with unerring aim fairly into her heart, and as she saw Apollo, she hated and feared him as she had never before feared or hated anyone. Without a word, she turned and fled.

Apollo followed, and tried to soothe her with gentle pleading.

"Why do you flee from me, Daphne?" he called. "Am I a wild beast—a lion or fierce tiger? Stop, for I will do you no harm. I am Apollo, the god of beauty and song, and I love you, Daphne. All

the world worships me, and you shall have all that the world can give. Do but stop and hear me."

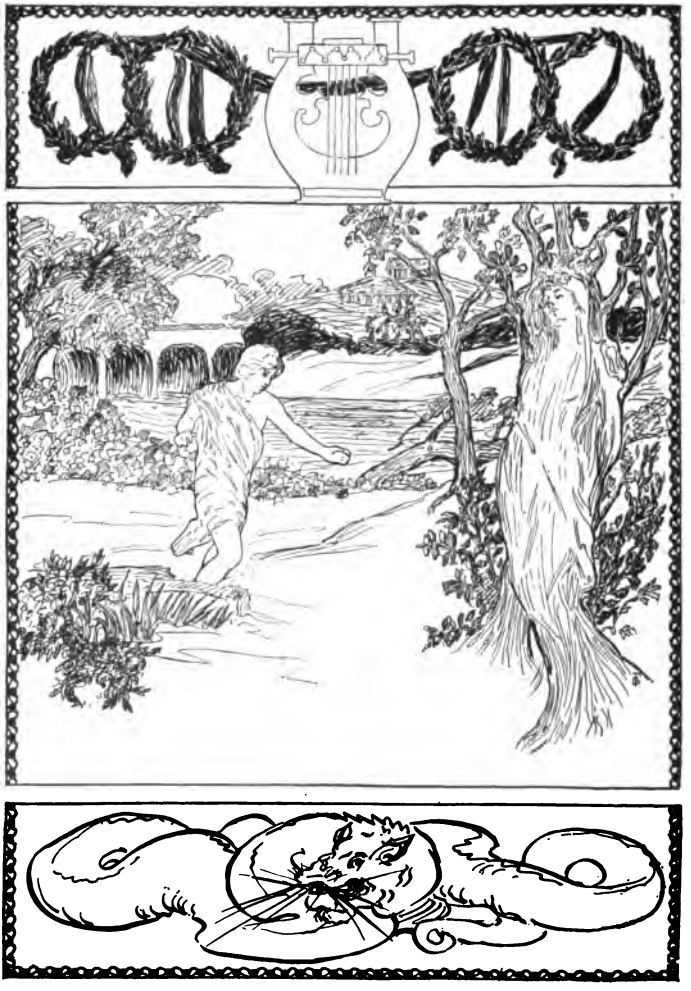
But Daphne would not listen. She fled only the more swiftly, and Apollo, with all his speed, could hardly keep in sight of her fair swift feet and her shining white shoulders and flowing golden hair.

Then he redoubled his pace and began to gain upon her; but the nearer he came, the more terrified was poor Daphne. It was as if she were a hunted hare and Apollo the hound baying close behind, for each word of Apollo's voice, sweet and flattering though it was, scared her anew.

Suddenly, before her, she saw the glint of water. It was the river Peneüs.

"O my father," she cried, "help me! Save me from him I hate. Change my form, or let the earth swallow me up. Quick, for he is here."

Apollo also had seen the river, and he thought, "Now I have her. She can flee no further."



DAPHNE CHANGING INTO A LAUREL TREE.

As he came out upon the river bank, there stood Daphne, so quiet that he thought she had yielded. He went quickly to her and caught her in his arms.

But even as he touched her, he felt her change. Her body grew hard and fixed and wooden, her hands and arms sprouted out with shining leaves, and instead of her fair face there was a great cluster of beautiful pink and white flowers. Daphne had become a laurel tree.

Apollo kissed the flowers, which seemed even then to draw back from his touch.

"Though you would not be my bride, Daphne," he said, "you shall be my tree, and the tree of all poets among men forever."

Then he turned sadly away, but for a long, long time afterward, the world was for him a very lonely place.

And as for Cupid, we do not hear that Apollo ever again treated him with scorn, for he had felt his power.

CUPID AND THE BEE.

Cupid once upon a bed
Of roses laid his weary head;
Luckless urchin, not to see
Within the leaves a slumbering bee!
The bee awak'd—with anger wild
The bee awak'd, and stung the child.
Loud and piteous are his cries;
To Venus quick he runs, he flies;
"Oh mother!—I am wounded through—
I die with pain—in sooth I do!
Stung by some little angry thing,
Some serpent on a tiny wing—
A bee it was—for once, I know
I heard a rustic call it so."
Thus he spoke, and she the while
Heard him with a soothing smile;
Then said, "My infant, if so much
Thou feel the little wild-bee's touch,
How must the heart, ah, Cupid! be,
The hapless heart that's stung by thee!"

THOMAS MOORE

ORPHEUS AND EURYDICE.

There once lived in Thrace a wonderful young musician named Orpheus, son of the muse Calliope. He understood all music. When the birds sang, when the trees murmured and whispered, when the waters gurgled, Orpheus knew what was meant. When the storms roared and winds shrieked and thunders muttered and rolled, he seemed to hear in them the very voices of the gods.

And he himself could sing. Apollo, god of light and song, loved him and gave him his own divine harp, which the Greeks

called a lyre. Upon this lyre Orpheus would play as he sang. Never since Apollo tended the flocks of King Admetus had such music been heard upon earth. The birds would cease singing, for they preferred his songs to their own; the spirits in the trees would hush the murmur of their leaves to hear him; and the gentle gods of the rivers, and Neptune himself, god of old ocean, would quiet their waters to listen. Even the beasts of the wood — the lions and bears and slender, spotted deer — would come from their hiding places and lie down peacefully about him as he played the lyre and sang. Thus Orpheus had many friends.

But the one who loved him most was the beautiful goddess-born Eurydice, and Orpheus returned her love with all his heart. Their wedding was soon celebrated, and the guests agreed that never upon earth had been seen a nobler or a happier pair, for Orpheus and his bride were fair and

tall, and looked as though they were two of the sunny gods of Olympus.

At the end of a Grecian wedding, great marriage-torches were lit; the smoke of the burning was rich and fragrant, and rose as incense to Hymen, the marriage god. When the torches were lit at the wedding of Orpheus and Eurydice, the smoke would not rise, but sank to the ground; then the flames began to sputter and go out, nor could the torches by any effort be made to burn well.

"Bring other torches," cried Orpheus, for the guests were dismayed at the evil omen.

But the other torches burned no better. The guests talked in whispers. Orpheus and Eurydice alone were unchanged. It seemed to them no very great matter whether the torches burned or not.

Yet an evil fate was waiting, and it came quickly. Next day, as Eurydice was walking through the grass, she trod upon a poisonous serpent, which turned and bit

her in the ankle. Within an hour the beautiful young wife was dead and her spirit had gone down to the underworld, to the dark kingdom of Pluto and Proserpina.

Orpheus was heartbroken. He sang of his grief to the gods of the streams and to the spirits of the trees, but they could not help him. He sang of it to the people of Thrace, but they could only weep with him. He besought with song the gods of Olympus, but though the gods loved him, they could not control the grim god Death, nor make him send back Eurydice.

Then Orpheus said, "I will seek her where she is," and he rose and went to the promontory of Tænarus.

Here there was a long cave which led down into the underworld. Orpheus knew well that none but Hercules had ever returned along that road, but he went in, leaving behind him the world of light and life. Down and down it led him, but at

last it became less steep and, with a turn, led him out into the kingdom of Pluto.

The moment he appeared, a host of monsters made a rush at him. As they came near, Orpheus began to play and to sing. At that sound the creatures grew calm and did him no harm, but listening, followed him down to the edge of the river Styx.

Charon, the ferryman, saw him coming and pushed his boat far out into the stream. There he stopped.

But when he heard the sweet, sad music, he came slowly toward the shore and let the grieving musician step into his boat. It nearly sank with the weight of a live person. As the boat was moving across the stream, Orpheus sang of Eurydice, and it is said that the tears flowed down the cheeks even of grim old pitiless Charon.

On the farther side of Styx stood Cerberus, barking savagely. Yet he, too, let Orpheus pass unharmed and forgot his

fierceness at the sound of that wondrous lyre and voice.

After that the way was straight. The spirits of men who were dead came about Orpheus in great crowds, but no one did him harm, and he passed through them without stopping, his thoughts being all of Eurydice. Thus he reached the great palace of Pluto, passed through the iron gates, and came into the presence of the dread god himself, sitting upon his throne with Proserpina at his side. All about the hall stood the lesser gods and spirits of the world of shadows.

The time had come for Orpheus to plead his cause. He struck upon the strings of his lyre and began.

In his song, he told how he had loved Eurydice, and she him, how they were happily married, and how, without cause, she had been snatched from him in an hour. He told how he had tried to endure her loss, and how he had felt it more and more until at last he had been driven to

come down into the underworld, not searching for glory or fame, nor to show his power or strength, but to beg for the spirit of Eurydice, whom the underworld would never miss from its hosts of inhabitants.

"I pray you, let her go," he sang to the dark ruler. "She will come back at the end of her life. You do but lend her to me, not lose her. Think, O Pluto, what pain you suffer while Proserpina is away from you each year—but my sorrow is greater, for Eurydice is lost to me all the year. Think, O Proserpina, great queen, what woe you suffered when you thought never again to see the face of majestic Ceres, your mother—such is my woe, and greater, for I had rather be here with her than there alone, and if Eurydice may not go, I, too, will return no more to light and life."

So sweet had been the music of Orpheus that when he ended, dark Pluto was moved and Proserpina's cheeks were bathed in

ORPHEUS AND EURYDICE RETURNING.

tears. All through the underworld the charm was felt. It is said even that the bad spirits in punishment were freed from their everlasting tortures while Orpheus sang.

"Grant him Eurydice, O King," said Proserpina; and Pluto, nodding, said:—

"Let her be called."

In a few moments Eurydice came in, tall and fair and beautiful as a goddess of Olympus.

"Take her, sweet singer," said Pluto, "for you have deserved her well; but have a care. If before you reach the upper world you look back to see her, you must lose her. Follow him, Eurydice."

Then Orpheus turned and went out, and Eurydice followed close behind him, but beside her walked the Olympian god Mercury, without whom no spirit can leave the underworld. On through the dark land they went, through hosts of spirits, by Cerberus with his three terrible heads, across Styx in Charon's boat, and up the

other shore to the foot of the road leading to the world above.

All the way Orpheus was thinking, "Is she behind me? Have they really let her come? Are we really to begin life again and be happy once more?" He walked softly, so as to hear her footsteps. There was not a sound. "Is she really following?" he asked himself, but he dared not turn to see. Yet Eurydice was there, and by her walked Mercury, who alone could lead her out.

Then began the upward climb. The descent into the world of death is easy, but the return—this is the work, this the labor. Orpheus, with all his eagerness, mounted but slowly, and always the doubt tormented him—"Is she really following? Is it possible that they intend to give her back to me?" He could not believe that it was true. He listened to hear her step —her breath—for he himself was breathing hard. There was not a sound. He called, softly, "Eurydice!" There was no

reply. But he dared not turn to look. He must not lose her, after all. Yet Eurydice was always following, though her voice could not be heard and her footstep was as yet only the noiseless tread of a spirit.

But at last the end was in sight. The light of day began to show faintly in the cave. A few steps more and they would be out.

Again Orpheus walked softly and asked himself:—

"Is she really following? Have the gods of the underworld really let her go?"

He dared not believe it. Then, suddenly, he heard her. That was her step behind him. He could hear her gentle breathing. The joy and delight made him forget all else.

"It is true, after all," he cried. "They have really given you back, O my Eurydice!" and he turned round.

There stood Eurydice in the faint light, tall and beautiful and real. Orpheus took her by the hand—and it seemed to melt into nothing in his.

"O Orpheus," she said; and then, "Goodbye! goodbye!" The last word was only a whisper, and she was gone. Mercury alone stood before him in the faint light of the cavern.

Orpheus stood dazed; then he would have rushed after her, but the god stood in his way.

"You can do nothing," he said.

And Orpheus, stupid with grief at his second loss, turned and went out into the fresh, bright air, where the careless sun was shining and the birds were singing, where the grass and the trees were green and the blue sea was breaking in long waves at the foot of the promontory of Tænarus.

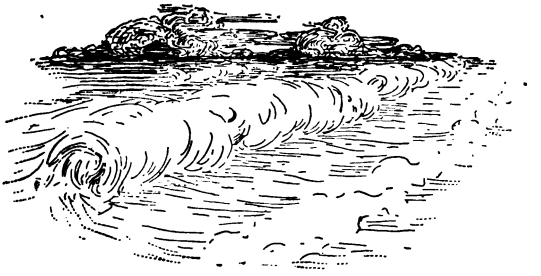
It is said that the sweet and wondrous singer lived seven long months of grief before the god Death came at last to take him down to his Eurydice. When he died, Jupiter put the lyre which had so charmed gods and men up in the northern sky. There it still shines, set with brilliant stars.

ORPHEUS WITH HIS LUTE.

Orpheus, with his lute, made trees,
And the mountain-tops that freeze,
Bow themselves, when he did sing:
To his music, plants and flowers
Ever sprung, as sun and showers
There had made a lasting spring.

Everything that heard him play,
Even the billows of the sea,
Hung their heads, and then lay by.
In sweet music is such art,
Killing care and grief of heart
Fall asleep, or, hearing, die.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.



HERCULES.

Some men are born to a great deal of trouble, yet bear it with so light a heart that they never seem to have a care in the world. This was the case with Hercules. His troubles began early, and they never ceased until the day he died, but he was always cheerful and strong.

When he was a mere babe of a few months, he met his first great danger. His mother, Alcmena, had put him to bed one night with his twin brother, Iphicles. Their cradle was the inside of a bronze shield. The babes were healthy, and they

had been given a good warm bath and plenty of milk before they were tucked in, so they were asleep in a moment.

Toward midnight two huge snakes came crawling into the nursery. Marvelous snakes they were, and their eyes shone with a light which filled the room with its glare. They came gliding swiftly toward the cradle, and there might then have been an end of both of its little occupants, but at that moment the children awoke. Iphicles, like any other baby, was terribly frightened and began to cry with all his lungs, but Hercules did not seem in the least afraid. When the snakes came close to him, he seized them both about the necks and squeezed them with all his might.

Then Alcmena, who had heard the crying, came running in, and what a fright she had! There was Iphicles screaming with terror, and there was Hercules squeezing the serpents, whose eyes were still flashing fire. But Hercules

soon put her fears to rest, for he tightened his grip, and laughing as if it were all a great joke, he held up the snakes and dropped them dead to the floor.

Alcmena gazed in wonder. She was even a little afraid, for it was clear that her son was no ordinary baby. She sent for the aged seer Tiresias, and asked him what it all meant, for Tiresias could tell future events.

"Alcmena," said the seer, "your son has power that is more than human. He will be a great sufferer and a great hero, for he will pass his whole life ridding the world of plagues and monsters. Yes, and he will be more than a hero, for I foresee that when he comes to die, Jupiter will take him up to Olympus and make him one of the gods of heaven."

Alcmena was a good mother, and after hearing that, she did all that was possible for her son. The boy was very carefully and sternly reared. Linus, son of the god Apollo, taught him his letters, and

he had other teachers such as mortals seldom have. He learned to box and wrestle, to shoot with the bow, and to drive his chariot close round the goal post without ever touching. He learned to live on simple fare, to endure heat and cold, and to face danger without fear. So he grew strong and wise and brave.

Now when Hercules came to be a young man, he had to meet a great temptation and make a very serious choice.

One day, as he was walking along a quiet woodland path, he saw two beautiful goddesses sitting beside the way where it forked. Goddesses they really were, though they seemed more like beautiful women. One of them, when she saw Hercules, came running toward him, as if she were afraid the other would reach him first.

"Hercules," she said, "I see that you are in doubt which path you will choose.

If you will follow me, I will lead you along the smoothest way, and the pleasantest. You shall taste of every joy, you shall never meet with any sorrow, you shall never have to worry about any troubles, you shall never know hunger or thirst; best of all, you shall never have to fight in battle."

"A gentle woman, and a gentle story," said Hercules to himself; but to her he said, "Pray, what is your name, fair one?"

And she answered, "Men call me Happiness."

"Surely," thought Hercules, "the path of Happiness is as if strewn with roses."

Then the other goddess drew near. She was taller than Happiness, and even fairer to look upon, for the beauty of her face had a nobleness and strength that Happiness lacked. She read the thought of Hercules, and in a voice full of kindness and pity, she said:—

"Yes, Hercules, the path of Happiness

indeed seems strewn with roses, but in spite of that, come with me. You shall know hunger and thirst, pain and sorrow, toil, and the din of battle; but you shall learn to master them all, and you shall find a joy deeper than earthly pleasure. The gifts that Happiness offers you will perish, but my gifts will not perish."

These words filled Hercules' heart with sadness, yet he found a deep delight in them. He looked up, and all he said was, "Fair one, what do men call you?"

And she answered, "Men and gods alike call me Virtue."

Then the goddesses went away, and left him debating in his great heart. He remembered what Tiresias had said, for his mother, Alcmena, had told him. Then, lifting his head, he chose the path of the fair, stern goddess who is called, by men and by the gods, Virtue.

After this, Hercules, by order of the gods, gave himself up to the service of King Eurystheus.

Eurystheus was said to be the most ignoble ruler in all the world. From this time, he spent his days and nights inventing the hardest tasks he could for Hercules. The truth is that he was jealous of the hero, and very much afraid of him. He even feared that Hercules might try to take his kingdom from him, though he knew, as everybody did, that the oracle in the temple at Delphi had commanded Hercules to submit to his service, and he knew that Hercules was not the sort of man to disobey an oracle. However, Eurystheus trusted no one. He sought out one mighty task after another, hoping each time that Hercules would not return alive.

First he sent him to slay the Nemean lion, a fierce beast that had killed many men and was ravaging the land far and wide.

Armed with his bow and arrows, and with a club that he himself had made of a wild olive tree which he tore up by the

roots at the foot of the sacred mountain of Helicon, Hercules set out. He soon found the creature, and, first of all, let fly an arrow at him. The arrow never so much as scratched the lion's skin. Then Hercules tried his club. He hit the lion with all his might upon the head. It was a crushing blow, but the lion only paused an instant. Then he sprang at the young hero. There was no use for weapons now. Hercules caught the monster by the neck, and though the struggle was long and terrible, in the end he served him as he had served the snakes in his baby days, for he squeezed the life quite out of the beast. Ever afterward Hercules wore the lion's skin and carried with him the terrible club.

After he had killed the lion, Hercules had to perform eleven other mighty labors for Eurystheus. These twelve tasks were called the "Twelve Labors of Hercules." In most of them he had to conquer some fierce beast. He had even to bring up

for a day the great three-headed dog, Cerberus, from the underworld, that Eurystheus might have a look at it.

But perhaps the hardest labor of all was to get the golden apples of the Hesperides.

Hercules knew something about these apples. The old goddess Earth had brought them as a bridal gift at the wedding of Juno and Jupiter. Juno had been so pleased with them that she had asked Earth to plant them in the magic gardens of the Hesperides. There they were watched by three beautiful maidens, daughters of Evening. In the gardens, too, was a hundred-headed serpent, a guard that never slept.

Little would Hercules care about a hundred-headed serpent. Little would he care about magic maidens. But where were the gardens of the Hesperides? How should he get to them? These were the questions which puzzled him.

Finally he bethought him to go to

consult the river-nymphs of Eridanus, who were said to be very wise in such matters. That was a good thought, but the nymphs could not tell him. They advised him to seek out Nereus, the old man of the sea, for he could surely tell where the gardens were.

Then Hercules wandered far and wide looking for Nereus. He almost despaired of ever finding him, when, one day, as the hero was walking along the sea beach, he came upon him whom he sought.

There, asleep on the warm sand, lay hosts of strange creatures of the deep. There were sea-horses, and sea-lions, and sea-boars, and beautiful sea-nymphs that looked half human, all lying side by side and all fast asleep; and in the midst lay the aged sea-god Nereus himself, with his long white beard and hair.

Hercules drew near as quietly as he could and clasped him tightly about the waist, for Nereus must be conquered before he will talk. The aged god awoke

HERCULES AND NEREUS.

with a cry, and, at the sound of his voice, all the sea-creatures shuffled and slid off to the water as fast as they could, leaving Nereus to take care of himself.

Then began the struggle, Nereus doing everything in his power to escape, Hercules doing everything to hold the slippery god. Suddenly Nereus changed himself to a leopard, but Hercules seized him by the neck and choked him as he had the Nemean lion. Then he changed to a bear, but Hercules still held him fast. Then he became a little bird, but before he could flit away, Hercules had his hand about him. Then he was a fly, and Hercules all but crushed him. Then he turned into an eel, but he could not wriggle loose. Then he became a torrent of rushing water, but Hercules would not let it flow away. Then he changed to a snake, and Hercules almost strangled him. Last of all he became a huge flame of fire, but Hercules still managed to hold him, and even to smother him almost out.

Then Nereus changed back to the form of an old man. He had been handled roughly, but he admired the courage of Hercules, and though he grumbled, he was secretly glad that it was in his power to help the hero.

"Insolent man," he cried out, in seeming rage, "let me go! Seek the giant Atlas, who holds the earth and sky apart. He will tell you where the gardens of the Hesperides are, and will help you to get the golden apples; but let me go, I say!"

Then Hercules let the old man loose, and in a twinkling the god had disappeared in the depth of the sea.

The search for Atlas was long and hard, and Hercules met with many strange adventures. In Libya he fought with the cruel giant Antæus, whose strength was invincible as long as he touched the earth. That was a hard fight, but Hercules finally came off victorious, for he held Antæus high in the air, and so strangled him.

Then Hercules wandered through Egypt, and then far northward, until he came to Mount Caucasus. There he found Prometheus, bound to a cliff, as he had been for ages, exposed to wind and snow and rain, and to the blazing heat of the sun, because he had stolen fire from heaven. Hercules boldly set Prometheus free, and Prometheus, in gratitude, told him where Atlas could be found.

Far to the west, over land and sea, Hercules had now to travel, but at last, in the uttermost part of Africa, he found the Titan, standing enormous and supporting the sky on his head with his mighty arms. A solemn old giant was Atlas, for it was not a joyous task to hold the earth and sky apart for thousands and thousands of years; but he was kindly, and was glad to see Hercules, and glad to listen to his story.

"You wish to get the apples of Hesperides, do you?" said Atlas. "You will do better to let me go after them for

you. I know just where the gardens are, and besides, I am much taller than you and can get over the ground much more quickly. If you will hold the sky up for me, I will bring the golden apples in a few minutes. You look strong, and you will not mind it. I will come back directly."

So Hercules took the sky upon his shoulders, but his task was not half so easy as he had expected. He wondered how so airy a thing as the sky could be so heavy. He wished he had gone after the apples himself.

As for Atlas, he was glad to be rid of his burden, even for a little while. He stretched his great, cramped limbs to their full length, then setting out, in a few moments disappeared in the distance. The minutes, and even the seconds, soon began to seem very long to Hercules.

"Will that fellow ever come back?" he thought.

Indeed he was half inclined to let the

sky fall, but before a great while he saw Atlas trudging toward him, and as he came nearer, Hercules could see that he had in his hand a branch with the beautiful apples of gold upon it.

Hercules wasted no time in questions. He saw that Atlas had the apples. What he wished now was to get the sky off his shoulders and begin his journey home. He thanked Atlas very heartily, and thought that would be the end of it.

But Atlas took a different view of the matter. He found it very pleasant to be able to move about and swing his arms and bend over when he pleased. He did not in the least fancy taking up his burden again.

"Suppose you let me take the apples to Eurystheus," he said to Hercules with a grin.

"Very well," said Hercules, without a moment's hesitation; "but take up the sky just a moment, while I put this lion's skin over my shoulders."

When, however, Atlas, without thinking, had taken his old load once more, Hercules picked up the apples and said:—

"After all, I think I will take the apples to Eurystheus myself."

"Come back here at once, and take the sky again," shouted the Titan. But the hero only laughed and walked away, for *his* work in the world was to perform the labors commanded by Eurystheus, and it was *Atlas'* work to hold up the sky.

Hercules found his home journey easy. Without an adventure he reached the court and delivered up the golden fruit.

Eurystheus feared and hated him more than ever after this, but Hercules continued to be patient and brave, doing great deeds for others to the very end of his life.

Then Jupiter, who loves heroes, took him up to Olympus and made him divine, and he became the special protector and helper of heroic champions.

SONG OF HERCULES TO HIS DAUGHTER.

"I've been, oh, sweet daughter,
To fountain and sea,
To seek in their water
Some bright gem for thee.
Where diamonds were sleeping,
Their sparkle I sought,
Where crystal was weeping,
Its tears I have caught.

"The sea-nymph I've courted
In rich coral halls;
With Naiads have sported
By bright waterfalls.
But sportive or tender,
Still sought I around
That gem with whose splendor
Thou yet shalt be crown'd.

"And see, while I'm speaking,
Yon soft light afar;—
The pearl I've been seeking
There floats like a star!
In the deep Indian Ocean
I see the gem shine,
And quick as light's motion
Its wealth shall be thine."

Then eastward, like lightning,
The hero-god flew,
His sunny looks bright'ning
The air he went through.
And sweet was the duty,
And hallowed the hour,
Which saw thus young Beauty
Embellish'd by Power.

THOMAS MOORE.

ALCESTIS.

There once lived in Thessaly a good king named Admetus. He was a gentle ruler and led his people in the ways of peace, as a shepherd leads his flock to green pastures. His kingdom prospered, for war and famine came not near his land, and the gods loved him. The hill-sides were smiling with vines and gray olive trees; fleecy sheep and sleek cattle browsed contentedly in the valleys and woodlands; and his people showed the gladness of their hearts in song and joyful music and in graceful dance.

One day there came to the palace of Admetus a stranger. He seemed to be a beggar; but though his clothes were worn and tattered, he was fairer to look upon than any mortal man. He asked for shelter, and begged that he might tend the king's flocks. Admetus received him gladly and granted his request.

So the stranger became the king's shepherd. He would lead out the sheep, not with crook or staff, but with music, and the sheep followed him eagerly. As they browsed, he played sweet melodies, and the dappled fawn came out from the woodland to listen, and even the spotted lynx and the tawny lion; yet no wild beast ever harmed the flocks.

Not long after the coming of the stranger, Admetus set out to attend a festival at the court of Pelias, king of Iolcus, and there he took part in the games. He returned with many prizes, but he was sad, for he had seen Alcestis, the beautiful daughter of Pelias, and had loved her

deeply at first sight. He had asked Pelias if he might sue for Alcestis' hand; and had been told that he might, but that Alcestis should become the wife of none save him who should come to claim her in a chariot drawn by a lion and a wild boar. Pelias loved his daughter dearly, and thought by this condition to keep her with him long, for this was a task passing the power of mortal men.

Now when the shepherd-stranger saw the sad face of the king, he said:—

"Why do you despair, O King Admetus? What is it that troubles you?"

Then the king told him all, and said:—

"Do I not of right despair, for how shall I live without Alcestis? But who can yoke to his chariot a lion and a wild boar?"

"Bring out the chariot before the palace gate," said the stranger, "for it may yet be done."

Then the shepherd went out into the depth of the forest, playing sweet music

as he went. Sometimes the king and his courtiers heard him stop playing; then he would begin once more. After a while they heard him coming back, and soon he was in sight, still playing. But behind him, as he played, followed a lion and a wild boar, as tame as kittens. Now and then he would pause to stroke them with his hand. When he came to the gate, he harnessed them to the chariot and gave the reins to Admetus, who drove off without the least difficulty.

Thus it was that Admetus won his bride. When he returned with her to Thessaly, the people feasted and made merry and were glad. All loved Alcestis from the first, for she was as kind and gracious as she was beautiful and queenly.

Only one thing occurred to mar the perfect joy. The stranger shepherd, who had now served Admetus a year, came to take leave of him. The king was downcast at the thought of such a loss, but the stranger said:—

"Call to me if ever you have need, for I will hear you always. I am Apollo."

When Admetus heard this, he would have knelt before him, but already the gentle god of light and song and beauty had vanished. Jupiter had compelled him to serve a mortal man for one year to atone for a fault, but now his time upon earth was ended.

Thus Apollo departed, leaving his blessing upon all the land. Joy and peace and the fruits of peace reigned year after year. Alcestis was a loving mother to the little boy and girl that were born to her, and her mother's heart went out as well to her people. If ever Admetus was moved to anger, it was she that calmed his stormy moods. No wonder, then, that the folk of Thessaly loved her almost to the point of worship. No wonder that they thought not even the longed-for Islands of the Blessed could be better than their own native land.

But happiness such as this was not to

last forever. One day a grim stranger, close wrapped in dark robes, came to the palace and called for the king. When Admetus came, the stranger seized him and cut from his forehead a lock of hair, and told him he must die. Then Admetus knew that the stranger was none other than the god Death, and he felt that his day of doom was come, for against Death no mortal means can help. No man can escape when once that lock of hair has been cut off. Death hearkens not to prayers; he heeds not sacrifices, but unpitying, fulfils his word.

No sooner had the god left than Admetus fell sick and began to waste away. Hope left him. Every hour and every minute he expected to see dark Death coming again to carry him away. Alcestis stayed by his bedside and nursed him tenderly, but to no avail. The people prayed to the heartless god to spare them their beloved king, but Death turned them a deaf ear. Then Admetus, in his despair, remembered

the promise of the shepherd-god, and he called to him in supplication. Apollo heard him and came.

"If some one else will freely give up life for you," said the god of light and song, "you shall be spared."

With that Apollo left, but the word was spread abroad among the people.

"Surely," thought Admetus, "surely some one will be found among my friends to die for me—some old man, may be, who has not long to live in any case."

Yet, sweet as was Admetus' life to them, there was no one in the land to whom his own life was not sweeter, and so Admetus came very near to death.

But Alcestis prayed silently to Apollo in the night, and for the love she bore her husband she offered her own life for his. She vowed that she would rather die than be spared, if he were taken from her. She thought of his people, too, and prayed that Admetus might be saved to bless them with his gentle rule.

From that moment Admetus grew stronger, but Alcestis began to waste away. Dreadful visions came to her. Now she would think she saw Charon, the aged ferryman of the dead, coming toward her in his boat. Now she would think she saw dark Death approaching, and brave and true as she had been, the grim, dark look of the god frightened her.

Plainly the fate of Admetus now rested upon Alcestis, and there was no hope for her. Deep grief fell upon all the land. The people put on dark robes of mourning, and every sign of gladness vanished.

In the midst of their sorrow, when Alcestis was on the verge of death, who should come to the palace but Hercules? He was on his way to Thrace, to tame the man-eating horses of Diomed and lead them to his master Eurystheus. He was stopping to find rest and refreshment with his friend Admetus.

When Hercules saw the signs of mourning, he asked what they meant; but

Beckons Admetus. Takes Alcestis. Conquered by Hercules.

DEATH.

Admetus kept the truth from him, for he did not wish to burden him with needless sorrow. Then Hercules wished to go on his way at once, but Admetus knew how hard was the lot of Hercules, and would not hear of that.

Hercules yielded and stayed, though he saw that the shadow of Death was over Admetus' house. The truth is, Hercules had faced death so often that he hardly noticed it.

Admetus led him to a far part of the palace, and there food and wine were set before him. The strong man even crowned his head with garlands, and made merry in the house of mourning. But while he was making merry, brave Alcestis died.

Then the fair, queenly body was carried forth to be laid in a tomb, and all the people followed it with lamentation and mournful dirges. Of the household of Admetus, not one remained behind but the servant at Hercules' side. Even he was in silent prayer and sorrow, and it is no

wonder if grief was written on his face. Yet he strove to hide his feelings, for Admetus had bidden him to give Hercules no hint of what had happened.

Very soon the strong man, looking up, noticed how sad the poor servant was, and how silent.

"Ho, fellow!" he cried out, "why this solemn, moody look? Servants should receive their master's guests with beaming, cheerful faces. Why this great ado about the death of a stranger? All men must die. No one can foresee it or help it. Let us make merry, then, and put garlands on our brows while we may. So I would advise you to do, and rid yourself of your sour looks."

"Ah, this is no time nor place for merrymaking," said the servant, for he was beside himself with grief now, and was no longer able to keep silence. "This is no time for merrymaking!" he cried. "It is Alcestis who is dead."

Thus the whole truth came out.

Hercules was a changed man in an instant. One moment he stayed to ask the servant where Alcestis was to be buried, then he was gone.

He came just in time, for when he reached the place where they had buried her, there was Death carrying away his victim in his arms.

In a flash the mighty arms of Hercules were round the black god's body, and then began such a struggle as was never before seen in all the world. Death had to put Alcestis down. Then the two fought for her, Hercules crushing the icy, bloodless god in his terrible arms, Death clutching Hercules with his iron hands and breathing upon him with his pestilent breath. Long they wrestled and strove; then, suddenly, with a fierce strain of all his knotted muscles, Hercules forced the grim god down upon one knee, then half back upon the ground.

"Let me go," whispered Death. "Let me go; you cannot kill me!" Then

Hercules loosed his great arms and stood panting, but with the joy of victory on his face, while Death fled like a shadow before the sun.

Alcestis was saved. She lay upon the ground, breathing and warm. In a few moments she was able to rise, and Hercules led her back to Admetus. He drew a veil over her face, however, and did not at first tell Admetus who she was. She herself spoke never a word, for the shadow of death still hovered over her.

"Take this captive of mine," said Hercules, as he led her to the king, "and keep her, Admetus, until I come again."

"No, no!" answered Admetus. "No woman shall enter the palace, now that Alcestis is dead."

Then, at last, the hero told what he had done, rebuking Admetus because of his treatment. "Friends should share griefs with friends, not hide them," he said; and taking off the veil, he showed Alcestis, brave and gracious and beautiful as ever.

That day there was joy such as there had never been, even in the happy land of Thessaly, and the reign of peace and gladness returned.

Stout-hearted Hercules would not stay to take part in the festival of thanksgiving. He had other labors to perform, and went on his way to master the man-eating steeds of King Diomed.

PYGMALION'S PRAYER.

"O Aphrodite, kind and fair,
That what thou wilt canst give,
Oh, listen to a sculptor's prayer,
And bid mine image live!
For me the ivory and gold
That clothe her cedar frame
Are beautiful, indeed, but cold;
Ah, touch them with thy flame!
Oh, bid her move those lips of rose,
Bid float that golden hair,
And let her choose me, as I chose
This fairest of the fair!

And then an altar in thy court
I'll offer, decked with gold;
And there thy servants shall resort,
Thy doves be bought and sold!"

* * * * * *

"O maiden, in mine image made!
O grace that shouldst endure!
While temples fall, and empires fade,
Immaculately pure:
Exchange this endless life of art
For beauty that must die,
And blossom with a beating heart
Into mortality!
Change, golden tresses of her hair,
To gold that turns to gray;
Change, silent lips, forever fair,
To lips that have their day!
Oh, perfect arms, grow soft with life,
Wax warm, ere cold ye wane;
Wake, woman's heart, from peace to strife,
To love, to joy, to pain!"

ANDREW LANG.

NOTE.—Pygmalion was a sculptor of the isle of Cyprus. He is said to have made an image of a maiden which was so beautiful that he fell deeply in love with it. He prayed to Venus (called by the Greeks Aphrodite) to give life to the image. By her grace, accordingly, it was made into a live woman, whom, then, Pygmalion married.

PHAËTON.

As Helios, the god of the sun, was once driving his flaming chariot across the sky, he saw beautiful Clymene walking in the meadows below. The god loved her, wooed her, and married her. Their only son was named Phaëton.

Helios could not come down often to the earth. Every morning he had to drive the sun-chariot out from the great palace in the east, and all day he had to control the fire-breathing horses as he drove them up the hard road to midday and down the steep to sunset. Every night he had to

drive the chariot round from the west to the palace in the east, to be ready for sunrise.

Phaëton was very proud of his divine origin and one day as he was quarreling with Epaphus, a youth of his own age, he boasted of it.

"And is Helios proud of such a son?" said Epaphus, with scorn. "I suppose, rather, that he often blushes at the thought."

These words hurt Phaëton deeply. When he returned home he told them to Clymene, and all that night the proud youth lay awake, thinking of the insult.

Next day Clymene noticed how her son was grieving, and said to him, "Go to your father. See whether he is ashamed of you. He will prove to you before the whole world that he is not."

Phaëton heard these words with joy, and set out at once for the far distant east, where the sky comes down to the earth. There the palace of the sun stands blazing with burnished gold and flaming jewels.

When the young man came to the

palace door, he did not stop, but went boldly on and came into the presence of Helios himself. The god sat on a throne and was so dazzlingly bright that human eyes would have been blinded to look at him, and Phaëton dared not raise his head. His courage, however, did not fail. He stood waiting for his father to speak.

"What is it that you wish, my son?" asked Helios, gravely.

"Father," the youth replied, "if I am a worthy son, give me some proof that you are not ashamed of your child."

And Helios, as he looked at him, was pleased with his courage and pride. "Indeed, I am not ashamed of you," he said. "What proof do you wish?—for you shall surely have it."

Then Phaëton, without a moment's pause, cried: "Father, let me drive the sun's chariot for one day."

When he heard this, Helios was sorry he had promised.

"Ask some other proof," he urged.

"No one, even of the other gods, dares to drive the chariot of the sun—no, not Jupiter himself. I alone can control it. The road is difficult. Half the day it ascends, and toward noon it is so high that even I grow sick and dizzy if I look down upon the earth beneath me. In the afternoon the way is so steep that the horses are hardly able to hold back or to keep from falling. Moreover, there are many movements in the sky itself to turn the car from its course, and there are the great creatures which men see marked by the stars—the Crab, the Scorpion, the Serpent, the Lion, the Bear, and many more. These frighten the horses, and a strong hand must hold them in. Do not make the attempt. Ask something else."

Thus Helios advised him with a father's care, but the words only stirred Phaëton's heart to greater desire. He did not believe that he was really too weak to control the horses, and he burned to be able to say that he had made the dizzy ride.

At last Helios led him to the hall where the great chariot stood. Vulcan, the workman of the gods, had built it. The axle and the wheels were of bright gold. The seat was all of blazing jewels. Another such chariot was not to be found in all the universe, and as he gazed at the glorious car, Phaëton's desire to drive it grew double.

Meanwhile, the Morning Star had gone onward with his flaming lamp, and the rosy goddess of dawn had appeared. It was almost time for the sun-chariot to set out. Helios ordered the horses to be harnessed. The splendid creatures were brought out, prancing and stamping and snorting fire. Twelve goddesses, the Hours, harnessed the eager steeds to the pole of the car, and all was ready.

When Helios saw that Phaëton was still firm in his wish, he wet the forehead of the youth with a divine ointment, so that he might better endure the fierce light and heat; then he put upon him

the blazing crown which the sun's driver must wear. Last of all, he said:—

"Hold the horses in; they will go fast enough in any case. Follow the beaten track, keeping rather to the south. Here are the reins."

As he spoke, the wide silver doors of morning opened. Phaëton sprang to the chariot seat. The steeds started. The great car began to move. The day had begun. In a few moments Phaëton found himself driving up the steep road of heaven. Below him he heard the chorus of birds singing to greet the rising sun. He heard the lowing of cattle, and the voices of men going to their labor. Little by little all this grew fainter. Soon he was too high to hear anything more.

All this time the steeds were pulling hard at the reins. They felt that the chariot was not so heavy as usual, and they soon discovered that the hand and arm were not the iron hand and arm which usually held them in check. They

increased their speed. Phaëton began to be alarmed. He pulled at the reins and called the horses by name, but they went no slower.

Suddenly before them the Scorpion was seen stretched enormous across the way, with its sting raised threateningly. The horses veered, and in a moment were dashing toward the north pole, where the Great Bear stood. The Bear, surprised and enraged at the unusual heat, rose fiercely, and the horses veered once more. Phaëton, now thoroughly scared, tried to turn them back to the east. He hoped to put the chariot once more into his father's hands. But the steeds did not heed him. They were wild with fright. Then Phaëton looked down. Far beneath him he saw the earth spread out like a great map. The height made him dizzy. He dropped the reins and clung to the sides of the chariot. The horses were now free to go whither they would.

The people of earth had been gazing

PHAËTON.

up with horror at the scene. Now the sun was near the north star, now it took a sudden turn and rushed across the sky almost to the southern horizon.

"Helios has gone mad," men whispered, as they watched the zigzag course of the chariot. The time wore slowly on, but sunset was as far distant as ever. When the day should have been ending, the chariot of the sun was careering toward the north, above the eastern hills, and in it sat Phaëton, now pale with fear, clinging to the golden sides and listening to the rumbling wheels and the snorting of the fire-breathing horses.

Every moment the flight grew wilder. Once the chariot was carried far away among the stars, then the steeds rushed down within the circle of the moon's course. The tops of the mountains smoked. Trees began to crackle and burst into flame. The rivers steamed, and the ocean boiled. As the chariot swept by, all the north of Africa was changed

to a sandy desert and the tribes that lived there became black from the glare.

The earth grew hot and split open in great chasms so that the underworld saw the light of day and Pluto was alarmed.

At last, the ancient goddess Earth raised her voice. She it was who suffered most, and in her suffering she called to Jupiter:—

"If it be your will that I should die, destroy me with your thunderbolts, O Jupiter! Why should I be thus tormented? If this be not your will, rouse yourself before all is lost. Save me, who am almost burned to ashes. Save Neptune, whose waters boil with the heat. Save your own kingdom, for Atlas is fainting and will soon let the very heavens fall."

Phaëton was still clinging to the chariot, stifled with the heat and smoke and ashes, sick and terrified with the fearful speed. He felt only the car bounding and tossing under him as the mad steeds rushed ahead.

Then Jupiter seized a thunderbolt and spoke to Helios and to the other gods of Olympus.

"I must act," he said, "even though Phaëton be the son of one of us."

Now, Jupiter hurls his thunderbolts from the clouds, but in the hot air at this time not a cloud was to be seen. Therefore, the god launched the bolt out of the clear heavens. Fair on the unfortunate youth it landed, and Phaëton, hurled lifeless from the car, fell, bright as a shooting-star, to the earth.

Then at last the horses, tired and trembling, went to their stables in the west.

Next day there was no light in the world, for Helios spent the time with Clymene, mourning the end of their child. A monument was set above him. Upon it were carved these words:—

Here he who drove the sun's bright chariot lies.
In their mad course across the astonished skies,
His father's steeds he could not safely guide,
And in the glorious enterprise he died.

PEGASUS IN POUND.

Once unto a quiet village,
  Without haste and without heed,
In the golden prime of morning,
  Strayed the Poet's winged steed.

It was Autumn, and incessant
  Piped the quails from shocks and sheaves,
And, like living coals, the apples
  Burned among the withering leaves.

There upon the village common
  By the school-boys he was found—
And the wise men, in their wisdom,
  Put him straightway into pound.

Then the sombre village crier,
  Ringing loud his brazen bell,
Wandered down the street, proclaiming
  There was an estray to sell.

And the curious country people,
  Rich and poor, young and old—
Came in haste to see this wondrous
  Winged steed with mane of gold.

Thus the day passed, and the evening
  Fell, with vapors cold and dim;

But it brought no food nor shelter,
Brought no straw nor stall, for him.

Patiently, and still expectant,
Looked he through the wooden bars,
Saw the moon rise o'er the landscape,
Saw the patient, tranquil stars;

Then, with nostrils wide distended,
Breaking from his iron chain
And unfolding far his pinions,
To those stars he soared again.

On the morrow, when the village
Woke to all its toil and care,
Lo! the strange steed had departed
And they knew not when nor where.

But they found upon the greensward,
Where his struggling hoofs had trod,
Pure and bright, a fountain flowing
From the hoof-marks in the sod.

From that hour the fount unfailing
Gladdens the whole region round,
Strength'ning all who drink its waters
While it soothes them with its sound.

HENRY W. LONGFELLOW.

PERSEUS.

One morning as Dictys, a fisherman of the island of Seriphus, was going along the beach to his boat, he saw a strange sight. Upon the sand sat a woman in purest white, with a child in her arms. She was so beautiful as she sat there with the sunlight on her golden hair that Dictys thought she must be some goddess of the sea, although there was near her a small boat in which it was plain that she had come during the night.

When the woman saw Dictys, she rose and hastened toward him.

"Good sir," she said, "help me and my child. I am a king's daughter, though I have come to this island in such an humble manner. The enemy of my child wished to kill us both, but Jupiter has brought us here. Help us, therefore, I beseech you."

Her words were queenly and gracious, and Dictys, taking her child in his strong arms, led the way to the palace of King Polydectes.

There the whole court gazed in wonder at the beauty of the strange princess, and King Polydectes stepped down from his throne and came to greet her.

"By what name shall I call you, fair princess?" he asked.

"My name is Danaë," she replied, "and I am the daughter of King Acrisius of Argos. My child is called Perseus. Because of ill omens at his birth, we have been driven from home to die."

"Fear no longer," said King Polydectes. "You shall live here as befits your rank."

So a great house was prepared for Danaë and she lived for several years not unhappily. King Polydectes loved her and would have married her, but all her thoughts were of Argos and she was always hoping to return.

Meanwhile Perseus grew rapidly. He was tall and strong, and Minerva, the goddess of wisdom, loved him. Of all the children of the island, he was the swiftest runner, the strongest wrestler, and the bravest swimmer. He was their leader and their hero.

Now, when Perseus was grown to young manhood, King Polydectes grew angry at the continued refusal of Danaë to marry him, and took away all the riches that she had. Finally he decided to compel her to give her consent. This, he thought, would be easy if she were without her son Perseus, so the king made a plan to be rid of him.

On a certain feast-day all the great and the noble men of the island were

invited to the palace of the king, and Perseus among them. At such a time it was the custom for each guest to bring a gift. Many a rich robe, many a golden cup, did King Polydectes receive that day.

But Perseus had not been able to bring anything, and the others mocked him because of it, so that he was much ashamed.

Then the king, who had noticed all, said to Perseus: "Come and sit by me, for I value you no less because you come without a gift."

At this, the young man held his head up proudly and said:—

"O King, whatever you may command me I will do. Perhaps I may yet bring some worthy gift—some spoil won from your enemies, or from the foes of your land."

"Are you so willing?" answered the treacherous king. "Bring me, then, the head of the Gorgon Medusa. That

would be a great gift, for whoever looks on the Gorgon is changed at once to stone. No enemy could stand against him who had it."

Then Perseus said: "If I live, O King, you shall have Medusa's head," and he arose and went quietly out.

While the king and his court were still eating and making merry, Perseus went to the aged priest of Minerva and asked concerning this monster, Medusa. But the aged priest, though very wise, could not tell him where she could be found. So Perseus went out and walked along the seashore, considering what he should do, but discovering no way to accomplish his wish.

Suddenly he saw before him a woman, very old and much bent with years.

"Why are you here, Perseus, when the king and his court are feasting?" she asked.

"I have promised King Polydectes the head of the Gorgon Medusa," replied the

young man, "and I will not see him again until I have it."

The aged woman smiled.

"What can you do against Medusa?" she said. "All who look upon her are turned to stone."

But he answered bravely:—

"If with the gods' help I find her, surely with their help I shall also conquer her."

Then in the moonlight Perseus saw that it was no longer an old woman who stood before him, but the goddess Minerva. The light flashed upon her breastplate of gold and her plumed helmet. In her hand she held her terrible spear, but as Perseus looked into her quiet face and her clear gray eyes, he saw that she was smiling, and he felt no fear.

"I will be with you, Perseus," she said; "therefore, be of good courage. Moreover I have brought you the sandals of Mercury, to help you on your way, and the helmet of Pluto, to make you invisible.

Seek first the Grææ, the sisters of the Gorgons. They will tell you where Medusa is to be found."

With these words the goddess disappeared, but at his feet Perseus saw the winged sandals and the magic helmet.

Next day at sunrise he was gone, and King Polydectes was glad at heart to think that now he should have his way. He sent a messenger to Danaë and commanded her to consent to the marriage, threatening that after ten days, if she refused, he would come with his soldiers to get her.

All day long Perseus was flying north upon the winged sandals of Mercury. Sometimes he sailed above the clouds, sometimes he sped along just above the hilltops. Cities and rivers and great forests passed under him all the day, but in the evening he came to the ice cliffs, where the North Wind has his home.

Here also live the Grææ, and Perseus soon found the three old crones sitting

upon a great floe of ice. They had only one eye and one tooth among them, and they spent their time quarreling as to which should use the eye and which the tooth.

When Perseus came near, the one who had the eye cried out:—

"Sisters, a man comes! Give me the tooth, that I may bite him."

But the one who had the tooth cried out:—

"Sister, give me the eye, quickly, that I may see where the wretch is."

Then they all began to talk and rage at each other; and as one was passing the eye to another, Perseus quietly put out his hand and took it.

When they discovered that the eye was lost, the poor old crazy goddesses began to weep and moan.

"Give us back our eye!" they said. "Give us back our eye, man!"

"Listen," said Perseus. "I will give you the eye, but tell me first where I shall find the Gorgon Medusa."

PERSEUS.

"No, no," they cried; "she is our sister. Give us our eye and go your own way, lest we curse you."

But Perseus thought of Minerva and was not afraid, and when the crones found that he was not to be moved, they told him.

"Go on," they said, "three days to the west, across the sea. There you will find the home of the Gorgons."

Then Perseus set out toward the west. Three days he flew. He passed the palaces of sunset and went on into the region where the chariot of the sun is never seen. At last, in this ghostly, gloomy land, he found the palace of the Gorgons.

Putting on the helmet of Pluto, which made him invisible, he went in; but he walked backwards, holding up his shining shield as a mirror. Thus he might see the Gorgons without looking at them.

When Perseus came into the main hall, the three Gorgons were there. Two of

them were terrible to look at. Their heads were flat and were covered with scales, like the heads of snakes. Their teeth were like great tusks. Their hands were of brass, and each had on her back two long, swift wings that shone like gold.

These two were crouched upon the floor, but the other Gorgon, Medusa, was walking to and fro, moaning in pain. She was like a fair woman, but, instead of hair, a mass of writhing snakes covered her head and surrounded her beautiful face. These snakes were a horror to her and she was pale and terror-stricken because of them. As he looked at her in his shield, Perseus felt his blood grow chill.

"Will he never come?" Medusa was saying. She knew that some day a hero would come to put an end to her woe. "Shall I never die?" she moaned.

At that very moment Perseus was by her side. Looking into his shield, he

raised his sword and with one blow cut off her direful head and ended her misery.

To wrap the head in his mantle was the work of a second. Then he started for the door, but the other Gorgons sprang up with a shriek. "He has come!" they cried, and spreading their swift wings, they darted after him. They could not see him, but they had the scent of blood-hounds, and as he dashed out of the door, their brazen hands and terrible teeth were close to his winged feet.

Now the sandals of Mercury and the endurance of Perseus were tested to the utmost. On he dashed, with the furious monsters close behind him. Over the ocean he flew, and they followed. If they had but touched him, no mortal sword or strength would have been of any avail. Sometimes he rose high in the air, sometimes he darted down close to the waves, hoping to elude his pursuers; but their swift golden wings were tireless and their

scent was never deceived. For two days and nights they followed him close. Only on the third day did he begin to draw away from them, and in the evening they wavered and at last turned back. The race was won.

Far away Perseus saw the hills of Africa. Panting and exhausted, he directed his flight toward them, and there he set his tired foot once more upon the earth. He took off his helmet and prepared to lie down to rest.

But a new peril awaited him. This region belonged to the giant Atlas, who did not like strangers. He ordered Perseus to leave the country at once.

Perseus did what he could to soothe the big fellow, but Atlas grew more and more enraged. When at last he made a move toward the hero and would have crushed him, Perseus drew from his mantle the terrible head of Medusa and held it up.

In a moment Atlas stood immovable—

cry and covered her face with her hands. Perseus turned and looked out to sea. There, coming toward them through the waves, was the long black monster.

In another moment Perseus was darting toward it. Before the monster even saw him, he had plunged his sword into it up to the hilt. Then the fight began. The beast snapped at him with its great jaws and struck at him with its tail and limbs. The sea was beaten into foam and spray by its struggles. But Perseus with his winged feet was far too quick, and though he could not at once kill the creature, he plunged his sword into it again and again. At last his wings became so wet that they could hardly support him. He was forced to alight on a rock. The monster, however, was now almost exhausted. Its great hulk drifted to the hero and with one blow he put an end to its life.

Then Perseus flew back to Andromeda, and the two went together to the palace

of her father, Cepheus. There all was in a state of deepest mourning. The king and queen sat with covered heads, and all sounds of music and of merriment were hushed.

In a few moments what a change! The king and queen now wept for joy. Rich sacrifices were offered to the gods of Ocean, and preparations were made for a great feast of thanksgiving. But Perseus sacrificed to Minerva, and to Venus, the goddess of love.

In the midst of the feast which followed, King Cepheus cried to Perseus:—

"What shall I give you, young hero? Ask, for you shall have it, even to the half of my kingdom."

"Not the half of your kingdom do I wish," replied Perseus; "but give me, O King, her whom I have saved—give me Andromeda."

Cepheus was pleased with this request. He wished even to make Perseus his heir, but this offer the hero could not accept.

"I must carry the Gorgon's head to Polydectes," he said, "and take my mother back to her home in Argos. My home also is there."

Next day the wedding of Perseus and Andromeda was celebrated with great pomp, and before nightfall the young couple had set sail in a ship laden with treasure.

Meanwhile all was not well on the island of Seriphus. Danaë had refused the offer of King Polydectes and was not moved by his threats. On the tenth day she went for safety to the temple of Minerva. When the king came with his soldiers to seek her, he found her there, sitting beside the altar.

The king, for all his anger, dared do her no harm, for he feared the great goddess of wisdom; but he left soldiers at the door of the temple to seize Danaë if she should come out. All that day the queenly woman remained there, and Dictys, the good fisherman, brought her food.

Next day the king returned. His wrath now knew no bounds. He ordered his soldiers to seize Danaë and carry her forth from the temple, and when they hesitated, fearing the great goddess Minerva, he stepped forward himself to do the impious deed. Then Dictys stepped in his way and boldly commanded him to stand back. Mad with passion, Polydectes leveled his spear at the brave fisherman, but at that moment the door opened and Perseus, strong and calm as a young god, came in.

"What is this?" he cried, coming forward.

"On, soldiers!" shrieked Polydectes. "Kill him!" and without another word he hurled his spear at the young hero.

The spear was well aimed, but Perseus stepped aside and it struck deep into the temple wall and remained there, quivering.

"King Polydectes," said Perseus, "I have brought you the gift you wished. Here is the head of the Gorgon Medusa."

With that he drew the head from under his mantle and held it up before Polydectes' face; and the king, gazing in horror, grew stiff in every limb and stood there—stone. Thus Danaë was saved.

The people of the island would have made Perseus king in the place of Polydectes, but he refused. Then the people chose Dictys, the good and wise fisherman.

A few days afterward, the hero, with his queenly mother and his beautiful bride, set out at last for Argos and Greece, where his own kingdom awaited him, and there he gave back the winged shoes to the god Mercury, and dedicated Medusa's head to Minerva, who had helped him so constantly. Ever after, the goddess of wisdom bore the terrible snaky head either upon her shield or upon her golden breastplate, and she granted many a happy year to Danaë and to King Perseus and fair Andromeda.

CEPHALUS AND PROCRIS.

A hunter once in that grove reclined,
To shun the noon's bright eye,
And oft he wooed the wandering wind,
To cool his brow with its sigh.
While mute lay even the wild bee's hum,
Nor breath could stir the aspen's hair,
His song was still "Sweet air, oh come!"
While Echo answered, "Come, sweet Air!"

But, hark, what sounds from the thicket rise!
What meaneth that rustling spray?
"'Tis the white-horn'd doe," the hunter cries,
"I have sought since break of day."
Quick o'er the sunny glade he springs,
The arrow flies from his sounding bow,
"Hilliho—hilliho!" he gaily sings,
While Echo sighs forth "Hilliho!"

Alas, 'twas not the white-horn'd doe
He saw in the rustling grove,
But the bridal veil, as pure as snow,
Of his own young wedded love.
And, ah, too sure that arrow sped,
For pale at his feet he sees her lie;—
"I die, I die," was all she said,
While Echo murmur'd "I die, I die!"

THOMAS MOORE.

THESEUS.

Theseus was the son of Ægeus, the king of Athens. His mother, Æthra, lived in Trœzen, at her father's palace. Now when Ægeus at length had to return to Athens, he led Æthra out into the forest to a great stone which lay there.

"Under this stone," said he, "I have put a sword and a pair of sandals. I must leave you to-day, and you must care for our child alone. Keep him with you until he is able to lift the stone and get the sword and sandals, then send him to Athens to me."

"But, Ægeus," said Æthra, "can any one but a god lift such a great stone?"

"He must," answered the king, "else he will not be safe at Athens. Let him bring the sword and the sandals, that I may know him."

Then Ægeus left, but Æthra brought up the boy with all a mother's love. He was taught to be brave and generous, he learned to wrestle and box, to shoot with the bow and hurl the spear, and to control his grandfather's splendid horses; and often, in the evenings, sitting in the great hall, he listened while strangers told of the deeds Hercules was doing throughout the world. Thus the mind of the youth was filled with heroic thoughts.

All this time Æthra told him never a word about his father. Theseus did not know even that his father was living. But when he was sixteen years old, Æthra said to herself, "The time is almost come. The boy is already taller and stronger than any man in Trœzen."

One day she led Theseus out into the woods. They wandered here and there, but at last they turned in the direction of the great stone.

"Mother," said Theseus, "how long must I stay here idly at my grandfather's court?"

"But you are still only a boy, Theseus," replied Æthra.

"Hercules was famous at my age," said Theseus, "and I wish to go out into the world."

Æthra walked on without a word until they came to the stone.

"When you can raise this stone and get what is under it, you may go," she said.

Theseus took hold of it and lifted hard, but the stone did not move. Then he braced himself and tugged still harder, but the stone was firm. Ten ordinary men could hardly have moved it. He made a third trial. The muscles of his body stood out and the perspiration rolled

from him with the strain. Then, slowly, the mighty mass rose, and with a last great effort Theseus turned it over. There lay the sandals and the shining sword.

Then Æthra told him the whole story of his father and these hidden things.

"Take the sandals and the sword," she said, "and go to Athens to your father, King Ægeus, for the time has come when I must lose you."

Next day Theseus was ready to set out. His grandfather and those of the court would have had him go by sea, for the way to Athens by land was full of dangers, but Theseus was eager to try his strength and, if possible, to rid the road of the robbers and giants who infested it. He bound on the sandals, girded on the sword, and started.

The journey was full of adventures. The walls of Trœzen were hardly out of sight before a giant strode into the road and blocked the way. He was a famous robber and bore a great club of iron. It

was here that Theseus had his first fight, and it was a hard one; but in the end the robber, for all his iron club, lay dead upon the ground, and the young hero went on rejoicing.

The son of old Ægeus was valiant and brave!
From the near Trœzenian strand
He scorned to go over the smooth-flowing wave,
To his home in the dear Attic land;
But over the mountains craggy and high,
Where the wild winds rave and the dark clouds fly,
Where the fierce-hearted chief of the plundering clan
Lies in wait for the life of the wayfaring man:
There, there, and only there,
Would godlike Theseus go.*

As evening came on, a house appeared in the distance. It was the home of the giant Procrustes, the Stretcher. Procrustes received Theseus kindly and gave him a generous meal. Then he led him to the bedroom. Now, Procrustes had only one bed for strangers, and he made them all

* From John Stuart Blackie's "Theseus."

fit it. If they were too long to lie in it, he would chop off part of their heads or feet; if they were too short, he stretched them until they were long enough.

But when he tried to put Theseus into the bed he found it no easy matter. Indeed, the result of the struggle was that Theseus put Procrustes into it, and because the bed was much too short, the young hero had first to lop off the giant's head.

Thus the first day passed.

The following days were much like it, but at last Theseus reached Athens. His fame had gone before him. The people of the city welcomed him with great rejoicing, and he was taken at once to the court of King Ægeus. There the king received him, and honored him much, but never thought that this strong, fair young man, who had slain so many robbers and giants, was his own son.

There was one person, however, who knew who he was—that was the enchantress

THESEUS.

Medea. This beautiful and terrible woman was living at the royal palace and had great power over King Ægeus, and when by her magic arts she recognized Theseus, she resolved to destroy him, lest he should make her power less. One day she said to the king:—

"Is it well, O Ægeus, that your people should thus love this wise and beautiful stranger? Truly, I think he is already almost king in Athens."

Then Ægeus, who was old, trembled with fear.

"What shall we do?" he asked.

"Let him dine with us, O King," said Medea. "If there be two drops of poison in his wine, who can know it?"

The plan of the wicked Medea pleased the king, and Theseus was bidden. Never was Medea more beautiful than upon that evening. When the golden goblet of wine was placed before the young man, she smiled upon him, and said:—

"Drink, Theseus. Refresh yourself and

be of good cheer, for the king loves you well."

Then Theseus took the wine and, smiling, raised it to his lips.

But before he could taste it, King Ægeus suddenly struck the goblet from his hand, and it fell with a crash upon the marble floor. For at that moment the king had recognized the sword which the young hero was wearing.

"Where got you that sword, young man?" he cried out. "Speak! Whose is it?"

Then Theseus knelt before the king and said:—

"It was my father's sword, O Ægeus, and I got it by raising the great stone."

The old king wept for joy. But he would have slain Medea. The enchantress, however, by her magic arts, called in a whirlwind, and in a moment was gone. In many other lands she did evil after that, but the people of Athens never saw her more.

Then began good days. Theseus lived happily in the palace with the king, his father. He was always active, ridding the country of monsters, battling against foes, or helping to make and carry out better laws. It was not long before the whole land felt the good rule. Never had it been so prosperous.

But all was not yet done. On a certain day, as Theseus was walking through the streets of Athens, there came up the harbor a ship, all black, even to the sails; and the people, when they saw it, broke out into cries of lamentation and woe.

Theseus was amazed and asked the cause of their grief.

"Alas, sir," said an old man, "it is because the time has now returned when we must send seven of our young men and seven beautiful maidens to feed the Minotaur. Thus do we pay King Minos for the death of his son."

"Tell me about it," said Theseus.

"It is a sad story," said the old man. "Minos, the king of Crete, sent his son to take part in the games at our great yearly festival. The young man won many prizes and much honor, but some of his jealous rivals lay in wait for him after the celebrations and slew him. Then King Minos waged war upon us and the gods sent us famine and plagues. In the end we had to yield to the king, and we must send him each year seven youths and seven beautiful maidens. With these he feeds the Minotaur, a fierce and evil monster, half a man and half a bull. Twice we have sent the awful tribute, and now lots must be drawn again for the third time."

Didst thou hear the voice of woe,
  Cries of woe and wailing,
Lifted hands and tearful flow
  O'er the land prevailing?
'Tis come! 'tis come! the year that shames
  The humbled Attic nation;
'Tis come! the black, black hour that claims
  The monstrous immolation.

Seven sires must send their sons,
And seven dames their daughters,
The ripest and the loveliest ones,
Across the Cretan waters.
Minos there, who lords the deep,
With fate shall overpower them,
And in his darksome-winding keep
The Minotaur devour them.
Woe! woe! the year of blood!
The day of desolation!
When sorrow streameth like a flood
O'er all the Attic nation.*

Theseus looked out at the black ship and round him at the mourning people, and a firm purpose came into his mind.

"Choose but six young men," he said to those who drew the lots, "for I will sail in the black ship with the men and the maidens. It may be that with the help of the gods I shall slay this Minotaur."

When King Ægeus heard what his son had chosen to do, he was stricken with

* From John Stuart Blackie's "Theseus."

grief. He would have commanded him to remain and not risk a life so precious, but he saw that it would be in vain. The heart of the young hero was set upon the adventure. When the fatal day came, the seven young men and the seven beautiful maidens were led aboard the ship, and Theseus was of the number. As those on shore saw the black sails fill with wind, and watched the dark vessel slowly disappearing in the distance, they lamented much. "For how can even Theseus, unarmed, slay the Minotaur?" they said.

The people of Athens mourned, but the black sails carried the young men and maidens swiftly toward Crete. On the third day the ship hove to in the strange port, and the youths and maidens were led ashore to the palace of King Minos.

There, at the end of the hall, sat the stern king upon his throne, and beside him stood his beautiful daughter, Ariadne. The king wondered at the strength and

size of Theseus, as he saw him among the victims, and Ariadne gazed at him long; indeed she could not take her eyes from his fair, noble face.

"Oh, father," she said, "will you destroy one who is so princely?"

But King Minos answered, sternly,—

"My son was also princely and strong, yet the men of Athens slew him. None shall be spared."

Theseus said not a word. His eyes were always on beautiful Ariadne, and well they might be. She was as lovely as the myrtle that blooms along the banks of the brooks, as fair as the first flower that the breath of spring brings forth; and she was as gentle as she was beautiful.

That night Theseus paced up and down his room for many hours. He was thinking of the fight with the Minotaur which must take place next day, but most of all he was thinking of beautiful Ariadne. Suddenly the door opened and in came the

princess herself. She had not been able to rest since she had seen Theseus, and now she had come to save him. Under her cloak she bore a sword. Theseus took it with joy.

"Surely, I shall slay the beast now, fair princess," he said. "All Athens shall thank you for this."

"But you do not know all the danger," said Ariadne. "The Minotaur lives in a great and mysterious building called the Labyrinth. It is made up of curving halls and blind ways, of winding stairs and twisted caverns, so that no one who enters can ever find his way out. There the Minotaur wanders, lost in the maze; and though you should meet and slay him, you would starve in the confusing paths. But you shall not, stranger, for I will save you from this danger also."

Then she took from under her cloak a skein of thread, as fine and delicate as cobweb.

"As you go in, unwind this," she said. "The way back will then be easy. Come now, for you must act quickly."

So Theseus and Ariadne went out past the soldiers, who dared not stop them. It was just daybreak as they stood before the door of the vast building of the Labyrinth. Theseus went in boldly, unwinding the thread at every step, but Ariadne stood outside, trembling to think that he might never come out alive.

The hero had gone hardly twenty yards before he was all confused. The way parted in many directions at every few steps, and it grew worse and worse as he went on. Sometimes a hall led him deep down into the earth. Sometimes he had steep flights of stairs to climb. He seemed to be passing over the same path again and again, and to be arriving nowhere.

Suddenly he heard a great bellow. It sounded like the voice of a bull, yet it

seemed at the same time human. It was a terrible cry, and Theseus started when he heard it. Then all the splendid courage of the hero surged through his limbs, and he shouted in return. That was a warrior's shout, fierce and eager and strong. Ariadne heard it, and hid her face in her hands.

But now the Minotaur began to hunt for Theseus, and Theseus, as often as he heard the awful bellow, turned fiercely and hastened in the direction from which it came. It was not long before a sudden turn brought him in sight of the monster. The Minotaur had not yet seen him, but stood turning its head this way and that, sniffing the air and listening.

Its huge body was like that of a man, but its skin looked thick and hard like leather. Upon its great neck it had the head of a bull, but with teeth long and sharp, like the teeth of some enormous wolf. After a moment it saw Theseus,

and as it looked at him with its fierce, cunning, hungry eyes, he hated it, for it was like a beast, and was yet more like a cruel and evil man.

With a terrible bellow it rushed upon him, putting down its head to gore him with its horns. Theseus struck it with his sword, but the sword glanced off harmless from the monster's thick skull. Then began a hand-to-hand fight. The Minotaur was as powerful as a bull and as clever as a man. Often did it clutch Theseus with its hands, but he was stronger, and each time tore himself loose in a flash. It tried to bite him with its great teeth and to gore him with its horns, and Theseus with all his quickness and strength could hardly avoid it, and when, in return, he struck with his sword, the monster caught the blows upon its horns or else dodged them altogether.

At last Theseus pretended to give way. He sprang back several steps, as though

ARIADNE AWAITING THESEUS.

he were about to flee. The Minotaur gave a roar of triumph, and for a moment was off its guard. But in that moment Theseus sprang at it and plunged the good sword into it, dealing a fatal blow. With a great cry of pain, the monster fell to the earth and died. Ariadne, trembling outside the door, heard the cry and knew that her hero had won. She was timid now, and wished to flee and escape him, but her strength failed her and she sank fainting to the ground.

When she looked up again, Theseus was at her side. He had come out quickly, following the clew of the thread, and he was glowing with the joy of victory. In a moment Ariadne arose, and the fair young couple went back together to the palace of King Minos.

But when the king heard that the Minotaur was slain, he was filled with rage.

"They shall all be put to death," he said furiously, "and Ariadne with them, since she tried to save them."

All this was told Theseus and Ariadne. Calling the young men and the beautiful maidens, they hastened down to the harbor, and before King Minos was aware, the black sails were spread and the ship was far in the distance.

Under the black sails there were songs and rejoicing. The young men and the maidens sang and danced, and grateful sacrifices were offered by them to Minerva, the goddess of wisdom and courage, and to Venus, the goddess of love, for it was these two who had given Theseus his lovely bride, and had saved them all.

Next day the ship stopped at the island of Delos. There Theseus offered sacrifices in the temple of Apollo. Ever after, it was the custom of the Athenians to send out each year the old black-sailed ship to Delos, to repeat these sacrifices, so that it might never be forgotten how Theseus and Ariadne saved Athens from the terrible tribute.

When the ship went and until it returned, the Athenians rejoiced and sacrificed to the gods in their splendid temples.

The summer's sultry heat is gone,
  The fresh sea breeze is blowing;
'Tis the feast of Pyanepsion,
  And the sweet new wine is glowing.
A cheer,—a cheer across the main!
  A shout comes from the billow!
Theseus, Theseus comes again;
  Shake sorrow from your pillow!
No more, ye fathers, mourn your sons!
  Mothers, weep not your daughters!
He brings you back your dear-loved ones
  Across the Cretan waters.
From the trunk with trenchant glaive
  The monster's head he severed,
The mazes of the darksome cave
  With prudent clue recovered.
Welcome to thy country's shore,
  Thou king's son girt with glory;
And live in song forevermore
  The pride of Attic story!*

* From John Stuart Blackie's "Theseus."

ARIADNE AT NAXOS.

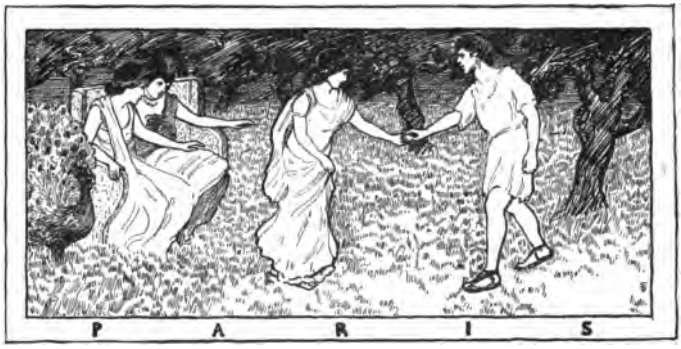
High upon the Hill of Drios,
As the day began to waken,
All alone sate Ariadne,
Watching, weary and forsaken: *
With her dark disheveled tresses
Dank with dewdrops of the night,
And her face all wan and haggard,
Still she waited on the height;
Watching, praying that the morning
Might reveal her love returning,
Swiftly o'er the quivering water;
To the lonely isle returning,
And the King's deserted daughter.

* According to the most common form of the story, Theseus deserted Ariadne, leaving her upon the island of Naxos.

"In vain! in vain! The seventh bright day
Is breaking o'er yon eastern land,
That mid the light, a long dark band,
Lies dim and shadowy far away;
And still from morn till eve I've scanned
That weary sea from strand to strand,
To mark his sail against the spray.
In vain! in vain! The morning ray
Shows not his bark mid all the seas,
Though I can trace from where I stand
All the flowery Cyclades.

"O had the North Wind woke from sleep,
As with our dark sails all outspread,
Across the southern wave we fled,
Down in the great sea's twilight deep,
Some silent grot had been our bed,
Where many a long-haired Nereid,
With ocean-flowers all garlanded,
Had knelt by our low couch to weep:
But softly o'er the brine the breeze did creep,
Bearing us all too gently on our way;
While I of strong Poseidon prayed
To guard the life I mourn to-day!"

THOMAS DAVIDSON.



THE GOLDEN APPLE.

When Peleus, King of Thessaly, was wed to the sea-nymph Thetis, all the gods and goddesses were bidden to the marriage feast—all but the goddess Discord. On the appointed day the palace was thronged, but as the guests were feasting and making merry, Discord, though uninvited, came into the hall and flung a golden apple in their midst upon the table. On the apple were these words: "For the fairest."

Immediately a dispute arose, for queenly Juno, and wise Minerva, and Venus, the

goddess of love, all claimed the prize, and no one could or would decide to whom it rightly belonged. Thus the joy of the marriage feast was changed to jealous strife.

Far away on the slopes of Mount Ida, in the land of Troy, there lived at this time a fair shepherd youth. He was a son of old King Priam, but he had been born under such an evil omen that, for the safety of the kingdom, Priam had been compelled to cast the infant forth upon the mountain heights to die. But kind shepherds had found him and taken care of him, and the little prince had grown up. He was now living, still unknown and unrecognized, among these poor people. He helped them tend their flocks, and made the wild creatures of the glens his friends, and he was so beautiful that even the gods on Olympus looked down upon him with admiring eyes. Thus it happened that when the strife between Juno and Minerva and Venus could not be decided,

some one said, "Paris, the shepherd, is the fairest of men; let him decide which is the fairest of the goddesses."

The goddesses were well pleased with this proposal. They gave the golden apple to Mercury and sent him to seek out Paris in his mountain home. In a twinkling, Mercury, with his winged shoes and cap, was off. He soon alit on the heights of Ida and found the beautiful youth.

"Paris," said Mercury, "this evening, when the sun is down and the crimson light is on these slopes, you shall meet here in the grove three goddesses. Take this golden apple and give it to her that is the fairest."

Without more words the god was gone, and Paris found himself standing alone with the golden apple in his hand.

Long before the sun went down, Paris was waiting in the grove for the coming of the goddesses. At last the crimson light was on the slopes and they appeared. Until now, the shepherd girl Œnone had

seemed to Paris beautiful beyond comparison, but he forgot her altogether when he saw these glorious beings, for the goddesses had come in all their splendor straight from the great hall of Olympus.

Juno, the wife of Jupiter and queen of the gods, spoke first. "Paris," she said, "give me the prize. I shall make you ruler of many men and many nations. Wide acres shall be yours, and abundant wealth, and men shall obey you as if you were a god."

To the youthful shepherd, who had lived a simple life in the wood and among his flocks, power and wealth seemed magic words and he all but gave Juno the apple without listening to the others.

But wise Minerva came forward, and she seemed so stately, and so calm and beautiful, that her very presence commanded him to listen.

"I will not give you power," she said, "nor wealth, but wisdom and foresight, courage and strength to endure trials with

a brave heart. These things are mightier than power and more precious than wealth; and they shall be yours, if you give me the prize. In time of trouble, I shall be by your side and guide you with wise counsel, and keep you from harm."

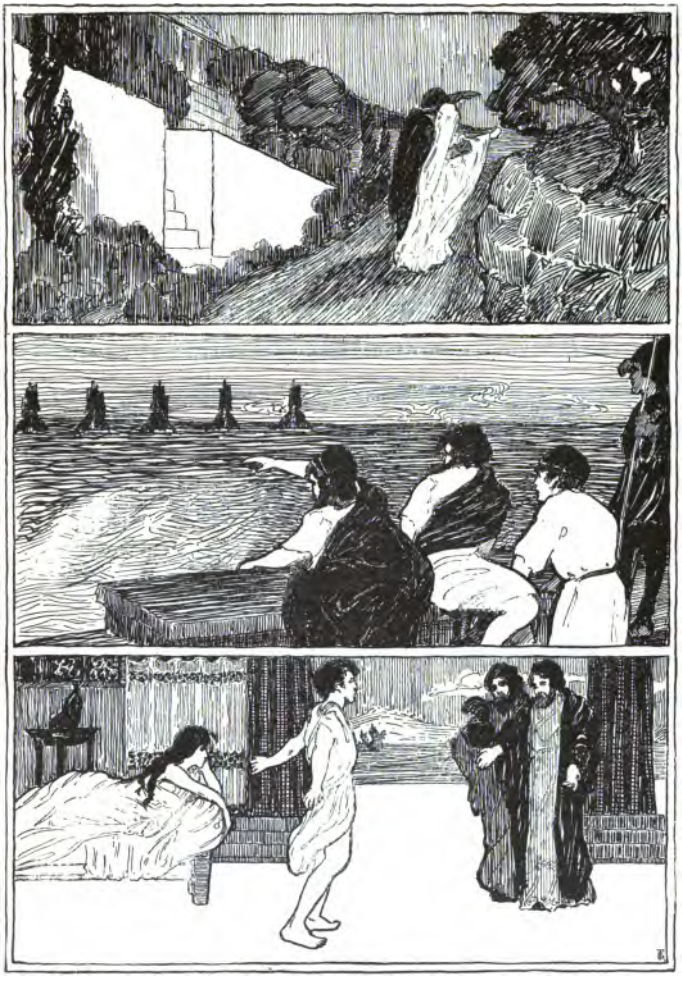
"How precious are wisdom and courage!" thought Paris. "Yes, they are beyond all other gifts of gods or men."

But before he could utter the thought that was in his heart, Venus, the goddess of love, stepped forth.

"Paris," she said—and Paris turned to look at her.

Her hair was as golden as the sunlight, and her eyes a rich blue, like the sky. Where she walked, the roses and violets sprang up about her feet and all the birds sang with joy. As Paris gazed, she smiled and his heart beat faster with pleasure.

"Give the apple to me, Paris," she said. "Give it to me, and you shall have the most beautiful woman in the world. She



BEGINNING OF THE WAR.

lives now far across the waters, but she shall be yours."

Then Paris, hearing her voice and her promise, forgot power, forgot wisdom, forgot all but lovely golden Venus, and gave her the apple, not even seeing the dark frowns of Juno and Minerva.

Then sleep came over him like a cloud, and the goddesses disappeared. When he woke at early dawn, the voice of Venus was still ringing in his ears. Down the mountain-side he hastened, nor did he pause until he came to the seashore. There he gathered sailors, and, getting aboard ship, put out to sea. Three days they sped over the waves, but on the third day they came to Pylos, where Nestor, the wisest of mortal men, dwelt. From there they went to Sparta, hidden among its pleasant hills. Menelaus, king of Sparta, wondered at the grace and charm of Paris, and set good cheer before him.

While they were feasting, the great doors opened and Queen Helen came into

the banquet hall, fair as the dawn, gentle as the springtime, and tall and queenly as Venus herself, and Paris knew that she and none other was the most beautiful woman in the world.

That night the sky was full of a rosy light. It was the radiance of the golden goddess Venus, who came and wakened Helen, saying to her:—

"Helen, go out to the brook beyond the palace gates. Paris awaits you there. Heed his words."

Then Helen went out and found Paris.

That night they journeyed to Pylos, and in the darkness went aboard ship. As they were putting out to sea, the aged sea-god Nereus came up from the deep and chanted a grim warning to Paris.

But Paris, careless of the warning, sailed on with Helen and came to the harbor of lofty Troy.

There he took her to the king's palace and Priam received them gladly. He did not know that the fair shepherd was his

son who had been cast forth to die, but Cassandra, the prophet-daughter of the king, knew it. She rose up among the children of Priam and cried out:—

"Father, it is your son! It is our brother!"

Then King Priam was glad, and because of the beauty of Paris, he gave no heed to the evil omen under which the youth had been born, but took him to live in his own royal household.

Meanwhile there was great rage among the Greeks. All their chieftains had once taken a solemn oath to defend Helen against insult, and now, as the news spread that Paris had stolen her, they remembered their pledge and were resolved to avenge her and to bring her back. Soon all the land was bristling with spears, and a mighty host was gathering. The news reached Troy, and the people of Priam were filled with anxiety, but weeks passed into months and no host came.

At last men shook their heads and

smiled and said, "It was only a rumor, after all. They do not dare."

But one day the watchman spied a mighty fleet far out at sea, and raised a cry that spread throughout the city. The people gathered on the walls to watch.

Nearer and nearer came the Grecian ships, and at last one touched the strand. Protesilaus was the first Greek to leap ashore, but scarcely had he set foot on land when Hector, the bravest and strongest of the Trojans, hurled at him his mighty spear. Right through the chieftain's heart it sped, and he fell dead on the shore. The Greeks, in anger, sent back a shower of arrows, and crowded ashore from all the ships. Thus the fighting began.

But next day a truce was made. Ulysses, the wise warrior, and King Menelaus came from the Greeks and in due form asked for Helen. They promised to depart in peace, even then, if she were given up.

Helen longed to return to her home, and Priam and his people would gladly have let her go, but Paris would not agree to it, and his will prevailed. The chieftains returned disappointed to their ships. Bloodshed and death and the destruction of towns began. The peaceful land of Troy had become a land of war.

CASTOR AND POLLUX.*

So like they were, no mortal
  Might one from other know;
White as snow their armor was,
  Their steeds were white as snow.
Never on earthly anvil
  Did such rare armor gleam,
And never did such gallant steeds
  Drink of an earthly stream.

. . . Back comes the chief in triumph
  Who in the hour of fight
Hath seen the great Twin Brethren
  In harness on his right.
Safe comes the ship to haven,
  Through billows and through gales
If once the great Twin Brethren
  Sit shining on the sails.

THOMAS BABINGTON MACAULAY.

* Castor and Pollux were brothers of Helen. They were famous heroes, and, at their death, became gods.

THE WRATH OF ACHILLES.

The war in the land of Troy continued year after year. The Greeks drew up their ships upon the beach and lived in them there by the sea. Many a battle was fought and many a town was taken and burned, but the Trojans would not give up Helen, and the war still went on.

Now, Agamemnon was the leader of the Grecian army, but the bravest of its warriors was Achilles, son of the beautiful sea-goddess Thetis. Achilles was young, but very swift and strong and bold. He had come with fifty ships full of warriors

to help the Greeks, and he led in so many fierce attacks that his name became a terror to the Trojan hosts.

Through him the Trojan towns were captured one by one, and at last only Troy remained. In this great city, protected by its walls, there was a strong army, but it dared not venture outside the gate, for fear of the mighty Achilles and his men.

It happened that among the captives the Greeks had taken, there was a maiden named Chryseis, the daughter of a priest of Apollo. All captives in those days were made slaves, and in dividing up the spoils Chryseis had fallen to the lot of Agamemnon, the leader of the Greeks. But upon a certain day the father of the maiden came to the Grecian camp, bringing precious gifts as a ransom for his child, and beseeching Agamemnon to set her free. He did not obtain her, however, for the leader of the Greeks wished to keep her as his slave, since she was

very beautiful and very skillful. He sent the priest away with angry words and threatened his life if he were seen again in the Grecian camp.

Then the priest prayed to Apollo to take vengeance upon Agamemnon for the deed, and Apollo heard him. The god of light took his silver bow and from afar shot his terrible arrows into the Grecian camp and slew beasts and men. All the camp was lit up with the fires upon which the bodies of the dead were being burned according to Grecian custom.

At last a solemn meeting of the chiefs of the Greeks was held and a priest was called to tell why Apollo was thus angry at the Grecian host. The priest feared to speak, but Achilles rose and said to him, "Speak freely and fear nothing, for I will defend you from harm, even though you shall anger Agamemnon himself."

Then the priest made known how Agamemnon had offended Apollo by insulting the father of Chryseis.

Agamemnon, like a good king, at once ordered the maiden to be sent back to her home, with sacrifices and gifts, that the plague might be stayed. But his heart was hot with rage at the loss of his share of the spoil of battle, and, as king, he demanded that it be made good; and when Achilles, with violent words, rebuked him, Agamemnon, in his rage, said that he would send and take Briseis, Achilles' share of the plunder and his favorite slave.

For this threat, Achilles would have slain Agamemnon, even in the midst of the Grecian chiefs, but Minerva, the goddess of wisdom, came behind him and caught him by his golden hair, and said:—

"Do him no harm, for you shall yet have justice done you." So Achilles pushed back his sword into its sheath and allowed Agamemnon to send and take Briseis, but after that he sat in his tent with his friend Patroclus, and neither they nor their followers would fight any more

against the Trojans. And Achilles wept with grief and rage at the loss of his slave, Briseis, whom he loved.

Then Thetis, the goddess mother of Achilles, went up to Olympus and prayed Jupiter for aid, and Jupiter took a great oath that she and her son should be avenged; and when he nodded his head, the heavens shook with a muttering of thunder.

Now, when the Trojans heard what had happened in the camp of the Greeks, they grew joyful and confident. They no longer remained within the walls of Troy, but came out upon the plain before the gates and fought fiercely against the Greeks. The Grecian heroes fought hard; Agamemnon, the king, and Menelaus, his brother, with Ulysses, the wise warrior, and Ajax, the mighty, did wonders and slew many of the Trojans; but Hector, the great Trojan warrior, with brave Æneas at his side, did more. Jupiter kept his vow and the victory was with

the Trojans. By the end of the first day all the great warriors of the Greeks, except Ajax, were wounded, and had to retire from the fight.

These things touched the heart of Patroclus, the friend of Achilles, and he said:—

"Let us take our men and lead them to the help of the Greeks, for they are in sore need of aid. Many are slain and many wounded, and Hector has driven them back almost to the ships."

But the heart of Achilles was full of grief and rage because of Briseis, and he would not.

Next morning the battle was renewed, and again the Trojans won. They drove the Greeks further and further back, even to where the ships were drawn up high upon the beach. Then they hurled firebrands, and the ships began to burn. The Greeks were fighting desperately, but it was all in vain against the valor of mighty Hector and his followers. All

seemed lost, for the Greeks had only the sea behind them and could not even escape without their ships.

Again Patroclus went to Achilles and besought him.

"Let me but save them from utter ruin," he said. "Hector is in the Grecian camp, and the Trojans are setting fire to our fleet."

Then, at last, Achilles yielded, but his heart was still bitter, and he said:—

"Fight only within the Grecian camp, Patroclus. Do not follow the Trojans out into the plain, nor to the walls of Troy. Let the Greeks know the sorrows of defeat to the uttermost for the wrong Agamemnon has done me. Take, therefore, my armor, and put it on, and mount my chariot and lead the Myrmidons, my followers, but remember my words."

So Patroclus armed himself in the shining armor of Achilles, mounted the splendid chariot, and led the Myrmidons into the battle. At the sight of him the courage

of the Greeks revived, but the Trojans were struck with dismay and began to yield ground. The ships were saved.

But Patroclus forgot the words of Achilles and followed the Trojan host out into the plain before the walls of Troy, for his courage was high and he was doing wonderful deeds of valor. There in the plain he met the mighty Hector, but his power left him, for the god Apollo confused his mind, and Hector pierced him through with his sword and slew him, and in the shining armor of Achilles he fell headlong from the splendid chariot.

Then began a great battle over the body of Patroclus. Many a Greek and many a Trojan were slain there, and the body was hidden beneath the dead. In the end, Hector gained the shining armor, but the Greeks saved the dead body of their brave companion. Hector retired from the fight for a time, to put on the armor of Achilles; then he returned and

did wondrous deeds, so that the Greeks were driven back again toward their ships.

But while they fought, Antilochus hastened from the fight and brought the sad tidings to Achilles; and when Achilles heard of the death of Patroclus, whom he loved above all men, he cast himself upon the earth and threw dust upon his head and tore his hair. And all his friends, as they saw the great hero lying there, burst out into cries of lamentation, and they stood near him, lest in his grief he should do himself harm.

Far away, at the bottom of the ocean, Thetis, the goddess mother of Achilles, heard the sounds of grief. She rose in haste through the waters and came and sat beside her son and wept with him. Then Achilles said:—

"Indeed, I have had my revenge, mother, and the Greeks have paid dearly for the wrong Agamemnon did me; but what is it all worth to me? Patroclus, whom I loved

more than my own life, is dead, and I sit here useless to my friends and harmless to my enemies. Would that there were no such thing in the world as wrath, for at first it is sweeter than honey, but in the end it is a burning and torturing fire. I will forget it, mother, and from now on I shall fight again in the front of the battle against the Trojans; nor shall I rest until I have slain the mighty Hector and avenged the death of Patroclus."

Then Achilles arose and went forth upon the field of battle. He had no armor, but the goddess Minerva threw a golden light about his head, so that he shone like one of the gods. And Achilles stood upon the edge of the trench and shouted his terrible battle cry. When the Trojans heard it, they paused and turned and looked, and there was fear in their hearts as they saw the great form and the shining head of Achilles. And the hero shouted again, and a third time, his terrible battle cry, and the Trojan host left off their pursuit

THETIS ASKS VULCAN FOR THE ARMOR.

of the Greeks and returned within their own walls, and, for that day, again the camp was saved.

Meanwhile Thetis went up the steep way to Olympus, the home of the gods, and entered the dwelling of Vulcan, the lame workman of heaven. Thetis had once done him a great kindness, and now he received her gladly and asked her what she wished.,

"Make me a suit of armor for my son, O Vulcan," said Thetis, "for he is sorely in need of it to fight against the Trojans and against mighty Hector."

Vulcan was pleased that he could do this thing for Thetis. He hobbled away willingly to his workshop, and all that night there was heard the blowing of his bellows and the clang of his heavy hammers. When morning came, he brought the armor to Thetis, who took it in haste down to the tent of Achilles, her son.

Never on earth had such armor been

seen. It shone like the sun, and the friends of Achilles had to turn away their eyes from it. But the hero, when he saw it, felt the courage in his breast rise high. He hastened to put on the helmet, with its plume of gold, and the breastplate and greaves of shining silver. Then he took upon his arm the wondrous shield, wrought with carvings of the heavens and the earth, of men and of gods. Finally he took up his spear, which no one but he could wield, and set out for the Grecian camp and the assembly of the chiefs.

When he came to the place where the chiefs were sitting, he went to Agamemnon and said:—

"Let there be peace between us, O Agamemnon. Let us forget our strife and once more fight side by side against the Trojans. I would that death had carried off Briseis, my beloved slave, rather than that we had ever seen these days of grief and loss."

And Agamemnon, hearing these words, was touched, and said:—

"I, also, was in the wrong, O Achilles, for the goddess of strife clouded my eyes, that I should not see; but now let there be peace between us forever."

Then Agamemnon commanded Briseis to be brought and to be given back to Achilles. Many rich gifts also he gave to the hero, and together they sacrificed to Jupiter, father of gods and of men.

Thus the strife came to an end and the chiefs went forth to battle against the Trojans. Many a brave deed was done that day, but wherever Achilles went with his shining armor and his terrible spear, the Trojans fled before him like sheep. All day long the battle lasted, and all the day Achilles moved along the line, looking for Hector. Once they met for a moment, but the god Apollo, who loved Hector, came and snatched him away out of the front of battle, and Achilles looked for his foe in vain.

Toward evening a panic came upon the Trojans. They fled headlong toward the gate of the city and crowded within the walls. Hector came last of all, and would not go in, but stood and waited for Achilles. His father, King Priam, besought him in vain, for Hector said, "Who knows but that I may slay him, though he is so great? And for me, it were better to die than to live in shame behind the Trojan walls after this day."

When Achilles saw that Hector was waiting to fight with him, his heart bounded with joy and he hastened toward him with all speed. But when he came near, Hector avoided him and dared not meet the hero in his flaming, heavenly armor. Achilles followed close after him, but as often as he came near, Hector avoided the combat and retreated. Thus they passed round the city three times.

Then, at last, Minerva, who hated the Trojans because of the choice of Paris,

came down and stood beside Hector. She took the form of Deiphobus, Hector's brother, and said:—

"Let us fight Achilles together, O Hector. Great though he is, he cannot stand against us both."

Hector was glad when he heard these words.

"You were always the best of my brothers, Deiphobus," he said, "but from this time I shall honor you more than ever before."

With that, the two advanced toward Achilles, who waited eagerly. When they came near, he hurled his mighty spear with all his force at Hector, but the Trojan hero dodged it and it sank into the ground. Then Hector hurled his spear against Achilles. Full on the shining shield it struck, but no human weapon could pierce that shield, and the spear of Hector fell to the ground.

"Quick, Deiphobus! another spear!" cried Hector; but when he turned, De-

iphobus was not there. Minerva had deceived him, and now she had taken back to Achilles the mighty spear he had thrown at Hector. Then Hector drew his great sword and rushed with desperate courage upon the Grecian hero. But as he came near, Achilles hurled his mighty spear once more, and it struck between the joints of Hector's armor and pierced him through and through.

So Hector died. The Greek warriors came near and gazed upon him and wondered at his great body, but the heart of Achilles was still sore with grief for Patroclus. He fastened thongs to the ankles of the dead hero and dragged him behind his chariot, through the dust and dirt, back to the Grecian camp.

There games were held in honor of Patroclus, and his body was burned on a high funeral pyre, but the body of mighty Hector lay face downward upon the ground.

However, King Priam came to Achilles by night with precious gifts and begged the body of his son, and the grief of the old man touched Achilles so that at last he burst into tears and granted the request.

Then, in the same night, the servants of King Priam bore back the body to Troy, and all the city mourned the loss of its beloved hero.

VERSES FROM "A DREAM OF FAIR WOMEN."

(HELEN.)

At length I saw a lady within call,
  Stiller than chisel'd marble, standing there,
A daughter of the gods, divinely tall,
  And most divinely fair.

Her loveliness with shame and with surprise
  Froze my swift speech: she turning on my face
The starlike sorrows of immortal eyes,
  Spoke slowly in her place.

"I had great beauty: ask thou not my name:
  No one can be more wise than destiny.
Many drew swords and died. Where'er I came
  I brought calamity."

And then continuing with a downward brow:
  "I would the white, cold, heavy-plunging foam,
Whirled by the wind, had rolled me deep below,
  Then when I left my home."

ALFRED TENNYSON (*Adapted*).

THE FALL OF TROY.

After Hector died, the fighting about Troy was renewed, and it seemed that the city must yield, for the Trojans had lost courage; but upon a certain day, as Achilles was fighting before the walls, a chance arrow struck him and caused his death. After that, the war dragged. The Greeks were unable to capture the city by storming the walls, and the Trojans could not drive the Greeks away. The siege lasted ten years. Finally the beautiful Paris was slain, and that might have been an occasion to end the struggle,

but even then the Trojans would not give up Helen. They had no mind to let her go after all they had endured on her account.

In the city of Troy, there was a statue of Minerva which was said to have fallen from heaven. It was called the Palladium, and the goddess had promised that as long as it remained within the walls, the city should not be taken. But one dark night in the tenth year of the siege, wise Ulysses and mighty Diomed entered the city in disguise, and stealing quietly into the temple where the Palladium stood, they seized the sacred statue and bore it away, through the sleeping guards, out into the Grecian camp. In the morning the loss was known and fear came upon the whole city.

Not many days afterwards there was noticed a great stir among the Greeks. The ships were drawn down the beach to the water, and were filled with the luggage of the camp. The Trojans gazed in wonder. Could it be that the Greeks

were going, and that the war was at an end? Night came on, and they could still hear the Greeks at work. Then all was still.

With the first light of day, a great shout arose from the walls of Troy. There was not a Greek to be seen, nor a Grecian ship. The host had gone. The people of the city swarmed out like bees, and wandered with delight through the deserted camp.

But near the shore a curious thing was found—a gigantic horse made of wood and leather. The body was supported high on heavy wooden legs and was so large that twenty men might have sat within it. Now, the horse is the animal sacred to Neptune, the god of ocean, and it seemed plain that the Greeks had made this monster in honor of Neptune, so that they might have a safe voyage.

"What shall we do with it?" the Trojans asked one another.

Some thought it ought to be burned;

others would have pushed it into the sea; still others advised that it be pulled to pieces to see what was inside. But one man said, "Let us haul it into the town and keep it as a trophy."

This plan pleased the people, but at that moment Laocoön, the priest of Neptune, came up. "What madness is this?" he cried. "Do you believe that the Greeks are gone? For my part, I fear the Greeks even when they offer gifts."

With that, he hurled a spear at the side of the horse, and as it struck and stood trembling in the wood, the horse gave forth a sound that was like the clashing of metal, as if the inside was full of armed men. And so indeed it was. The Greeks had not gone home. Their fleet was behind an island near the shore, and they had left a number of their greatest warriors in the wooden horse.

But as the spear of Laocoön stood trembling in the side of the monster, a new crowd of Trojans came hurrying to

the spot. They were laughing and jeering at a captive they had caught—a dirty, ragged Greek, who had been found in the reeds by the shore. He was trembling with fright, and at first could not speak for fear.

When at last he found his voice, he told a long tale of suffering, and of how he had fled into the marshes to escape death at the hands of the Greeks, who hated him.

King Priam was touched with his story and ordered that he be set free. "Forget the Greeks," said the king. "From this time be a Trojan."

Sinon, for that was his name, seemed to weep tears of joy.

"Tell us about this horse," continued King Priam. "Why was it made, and why is it so large?"

"I will tell you all," said the deceitful Sinon. "The Greeks have not gone for good. It is true they have gone to Greece, but they will return in a few weeks. This great wooden horse is an

offering which they made to Minerva before setting out. It was built large and heavy so that you might not be able to take it into the city, for if you should drag it within your walls, Troy would never fall. This horse would be a new Palladium for you."

Just then a wondrous thing happened. Across the ocean came swimming two enormous serpents. When they reached the shore, they went straight to the place where Laocoön stood with his two sons. In a moment they coiled about the sons, and when Laocoön came to the aid of his children, they caught him also in their folds. After they had slain all three, the serpents glided away and disappeared in the temple of Minerva.

At that, the Trojans were struck with awe, and said, "It is because Laocoön threw his spear at the wooden horse, impious man that he was!"

After that, there was no more talk of burning the horse, or of casting it into

THE WOODEN HORSE.

the sea. All agreed that it must be taken into the city and treated with high reverence. Ropes were brought and tied to the wooden monster. Wheels were then fastened to its feet, and it was soon rolling and rumbling toward the walls. Youths and maidens danced and sang before it as it moved, and children scattered flowers in the way. It was thought an honor to touch the long ropes by which the horse was being drawn. The city gate was too narrow to let in the monster, so the wall was torn down and a great breach made to admit it. Three times the shaking horse stuck as it entered; three times the clash of arms sounded from within it; but the people's ears were deaf, and they would not hear. Only Cassandra, the prophetess, daughter of King Priam, knew the danger. She stood upon the wall weeping and lamenting, but no one paid any attention to her.

When the horse had been dragged to its place in the citadel and sacrifices

had been offered to Minerva, a feast was held throughout the whole city. There was music and dancing, and much eating and drinking. The soldiers took off their armor and rejoiced with the rest, for the war seemed at an end.

But beautiful Queen Helen came with the Trojan Deiphobus to look at the horse, and a strange thought came into her mind. She went near the horse and called by name the Grecian heroes, imitating the voices of their wives. She called Agamemnon and Ulysses and Diomed and Anticlus. When the Greeks who were hidden in the horse heard the sweet voice with its Grecian tones, they started and would have answered, but the wise warrior Ulysses saw the danger and bade them be silent, and when Anticlus, despite all, opened his mouth to speak, Ulysses took him by the throat and put a hand over his mouth and held him so until Helen and Deiphobus had gone. Thus, again, the trick was almost revealed.

All this time Sinon was walking about the streets, and was praised and honored by everyone. But when night came on and the happy city was fast asleep, he went up on the wall where it overlooked the sea. Before long he saw far out on the water a flaming torch. It was the signal. The Grecian fleet was there, coming quietly back. Sinon hastened to the great wooden horse and called. In a moment the horse opened on one side, a rope was let down, and the Grecian heroes descended from their hiding place. There were Ulysses, Menelaus, Diomed, Pyrrhus, and all the other chosen warriors. Silently they descended, and were glad to stretch their limbs and to breathe the fresh air; then they went quietly along the silent street until they came to the city gate. The guards, deep in sleep, were slain before they could utter a sound. Then the gates were opened wide.

By this time the Grecian fleet had reached the strand. Up from the shore

came the dark crowds of warriors, and entered the open gates.

Then the storm broke. The Trojans awoke with the battle-cry of the Greeks in their ears. Hundreds were slain before they were fairly awake. The Greeks brought fire, and soon the whole city was a mass of flames. Good old King Priam was slain, and the last of his sons died with him. His daughters were taken captive to be made slaves. When morning came, the beautiful city of Troy was a heap of smoking ruins. Of all its brave inhabitants, only a few remained, and they, under the leadership of Æneas, were now hiding in the forest of Mount Ida, where, long before, Paris had given the golden apple to Venus.

But now Paris was dead. And the most beautiful woman in the world, Queen Helen, stepped aboard the ships of royal Menelaus and sailed back to Sparta.

Her heart was sad for all the grief and death she had caused. But up in

the glorious halls of Olympus, Juno, the queen of the gods, and Minerva, the goddess of courage and wisdom, were sternly contented, for their wrath had triumphed.

CASSANDRA.

Troy-town before it had the sea;
Behind, Mount Ida green and fair.
Cassandra loved its ramparts free,
Beaten with spray and salt sea-air.
All day her brothers chased the deer,
At night they feasted in the hall.
There was not even a shadowed fear—
Yet Troy must fall.

Of all King Priam's glorious line
Was none whom praise so close pursued.
Apollo from the height divine
Looked down and loved, and came and wooed.
He thought to save her from her fate.
He knew the distant future all—
The fiery doom that lay in wait
When Troy should fall.

He wooed her with his wondrous song.
The birds flew down to list his lyre;

And wild and bloody beasts athrong
Came with a peaceful sweet desire.
Cassandra heard the loving plea,
And gladly heard—but in it all
Heard only "Come beyond the sea!
Come, come, my bride, to dwell with me.
Immortal pleasures wait for thee.
Come, come!" She heard but that one call,
Not "Troy must fall."

He wooed her with immortal gifts,
Rare treasures worked with cunning art,
Spoils of wild streams and mountain rifts
Not found on any earthly chart.
Then last of all he touched her brow.
Prophetic power came at his call—
Ah! What is this? She sees it now:
"Troy, Troy shall fall!"

The god would soothe her heart's alarms.
"Be safe with me across the main."
"Nay, let me die ere to thy charms
I lend," saith she, "an ear again.
For what to me the sound of lyre,
And what thy lovèd sweet-voiced call,
If amid blood and wallowing fire
Dear Troy must fall?"

"Then thou wilt die?" "Yea, let me die.
But if the truth I boldly speak?
If from the city heights I cry
And through the market week by week
Warn of the fierce avenging rod
With which the heavens will shake our wall—?"
"Nay, sweet Cassandra," spake the god,
"Troy-town must fall."

O then she stood up fair and brave
And answered "Death I can endure,
But not keep back the word to save
My country from this doom, though sure."
Quick spake the angry god again,
"Go, plead with chiefs in the council hall!
This do I swear: it shall be vain.
Troy-town shall fall."

"Then let me perish that day, too!
Leave me to that," the maiden said.
And sadly-slow the god withdrew,
Sighing for one already dead.
For to the god the thing was done,
The houses burned, and down the wall.
The past and future were as one,
Since Troy must fall

But sweet Cassandra, ever true,
Spake day by day and would not cease,
Beseeching, praying (well she knew
Her grief and pain brought no release).
"Put by the wrong. Send Helen back.
Save us from war and soldiers' brawl"
She said. "Ye will not hear. Alack!
Troy-town must fall."

A bird amid the ocean storm
Might thus upraise its piping note,
Warning of reefs. Amid the alarm
Who hears the voice of that frail throat?
Oft from the windy battle-plain
The soldiers coming through the wall
Saw the slow-moving figure tall,
Queenly and grieving—saw her pain
That Troy must fall.

But after, when in flames and smoke
The city's glorious light was spent,
Cassandra's shade they would invoke.
Ah, then they felt the high intent:
Revered the spirit that put by
Olympic love, and died to call
Her land from ruinous destiny,
Troy-town from fall.

JOHN LEWIS MARCH.

THE WANDERINGS OF ULYSSES.

After Troy had been taken and destroyed, the Grecian chiefs, laden with spoil, turned their faces each toward his own home. Their labors seemed now at an end, and they rejoiced at the thought of seeing their wives and children.

Ulysses was perhaps happier than any of the others. Ten years before, he had left his young wife, Penelope, and his son, Telemachus, and the great warrior was eager to see them again, and to be at home as a king once more in his rugged island of Ithaca.

With his twelve ships he set sail from the land of Troy, and, because the wind was favorable, he first went to the land of the Ciconians, which was near by. From that land he started on his journey home

Before a fair breeze he would soon have ended his voyage, but as his ships were rounding Cape Melea, the southernmost point of Greece, a hurricane caught them and drove them far out of their course. For nine days the storm raged, and when it cleared away the fleet was far beyond where any ships had ever been before.

On the tenth day they came to a land that looked very sunny and pleasant, and Ulysses sent three men out to explore the region. Now, the only food of the people who lived there was the sweet fruit of the lotus plant. Whoever eats it, forgets all care and toil, and only rests and dreams. The messengers of Ulysses ate of it, and when they came back to him they had ceased to think of home and wives and children, and wished to dwell among the

Lotus-eaters and never to return. But Ulysses took them by force to the ships and bound them beneath the rowers' benches and set sail in haste, lest any of the other men should taste the magic plant.

After that, the fleet sailed on steadily through unknown seas; but one night the keel of the first ship suddenly grated upon the bottom, and the ships found themselves at land. When morning came, the sailors saw that they had come to a beautiful little island near what seemed the mainland.

"I will cross to the mainland with my ship's crew," said Ulysses, "and see what sort of men live there."

So Ulysses and his crew rowed across the strait. As they came near the shore, they saw the huge entrance of a cave beside the sea. They landed, and with twelve picked men Ulysses went in. His men carried a goat-skin of rich wine, to be used as a gift if there should be need.

There was no one in the cave when

they entered, but they found, all around, pails of milk and baskets laden with cheeses. Along the walls were pens full of lambs and young goats. It was plain that a shepherd lived there who was rich in flocks and herds. The men kindled a little fire in the midst of the cave and sat down to await his return.

He soon came, driving before him his sheep and goats, and a frightful looking monster he was. He was so tall that he had to stoop to get through the huge door of the cave. He had long hair and a shaggy beard, and only one eye, fierce and staring, right in the middle of his forehead,

He drove in his flocks, and when they were all in, lifted a huge door-stone which twenty oxen could not have moved, and set it against the entrance. After that he milked the ewes, and curdled some of the milk and stored it away, but he put aside the most of it in bowls for his supper. Then, first, he noticed Ulysses and his companions.

"Who are you, strangers?" he said, "and where have you come from?"

Their hearts sank at the sound of that great voice, but Ulysses answered: "We are Greeks. For ten years we fought under King Agamemnon at Troy, and now, when we thought to reach our homes, we have been driven from our course and lost on the ocean. In the name of Jupiter, help us."

"What think you that the Cyclops Polyphemus cares for Jupiter?" roared the giant, and seizing two of Ulysses' companions, he dashed them to the earth with such force that he killed them instantly. Then he ate them as if he had been some wild animal, and lay down to sleep among his flocks.

"Shall I draw my sword and kill him?" thought Ulysses. "But if I do, who will take the huge rock from the mouth of the cave? We should all die miserably."

That whole night Ulysses and his men sat, sleeplessly waiting for the day. At dawn, Polyphemus awoke, milked his flocks,

and killed and ate two more of Ulysses' companions. Then he opened the door of the cave, drove out his sheep and goats, and again closed the door with the great rock.

At this, the men were in despair, but the wise warrior Ulysses was thinking out a plan of punishment and escape.

In the evening, Polyphemus returned with his flocks. For his supper, he again killed two of Ulysses' men and began to eat them. Then Ulysses poured out a bowl of the dark red wine he had brought, and as the Cyclops was in the midst of his hideous meal, the hero came near and handed it to him.

"It is good," said the Cyclops, when he had drunk it. "Give me more, and tell me your name. I wish to give you a gift in return."

Ulysses poured out another bowl of the wine, and then another.

"Cyclops," he said, "my name is Noman."

"Noman shall be eaten last. That shall be his gift," said Polyphemus savagely;

but he had hardly finished eating and drinking when he grew drowsy and sank back on the earth in a deep sleep.

Then Ulysses brought forth from its hiding place a great beam of olive wood. Polyphemus had cut it to use as a staff, and had left it in the cave to season, but during the day Ulysses and his men had sharpened one end of it and hidden it. Now they brought it to the fire and held the sharpened point in the flames until it began to blaze. Then all together they poised it and thrust the burning stake deep into the Cyclops' great eye.

The monster awoke roaring with pain, and called for his friends, the other Cyclops. They soon came.

"Ho, Polyphemus. What is the matter?" they called. "Is some one killing you?"

"Noman is killing me," roared the Cyclops.

"Well, if no man is killing you, you must be sick. Diseases are sent by the gods; remember that, and be patient."

Thus they spoke, and went away, but Polyphemus groped about the cave until he came to the door-stone. This he lifted away. Then he sat down with his arms outstretched to catch the Greeks as they came out. And as he sat there, he roared with pain and rage.

But Ulysses was cautious. He bound the rams of the flocks together, three by three. Under the middle ram of each three, a man was tied. When day dawned, the Cyclops called his sheep and goats, and the animals went out. As they passed him, Polyphemus felt over their backs and sides, but he did not think to feel beneath them.

When all were out and well away from the cave, Ulysses and his men got down, hurried to their boat, drove some of the rams aboard, and pushed off. A little way from the shore Ulysses called out, "Ho, Cyclops, you who eat the strangers within your gates, Jupiter has made you pay well for your cruelty."

In his rage Polyphemus tore the whole top from the hill and cast it toward the ship. It passed over the vessel and fell a little in front of the prow, and the wash of the wave it raised carried the boat back to the shore. The men pushed off once more and again Ulysses called to the monster:—

"Cyclops, if any one ask you who put out your eye, say that it was Ulysses, son of Laertes, that punished you so."

"My father, Neptune, the god of ocean, will make you pay for this, Ulysses," said Polyphemus, and he cast another rock, larger even than the first, but this time the great mass fell behind the ship and only helped it on. Without more words, the men rowed back to the rest of the fleet. All set sail and made haste to leave that land.

After this they voyaged on until they came to an island floating on the water. They found that it was the home of Æolus, king of the winds. Æolus received

them kindly, and, when they left, gave Ulysses an ox-hide bag. In this he had imprisoned all the winds of heaven, except the west wind, which was to bear the fleet home.

For nine days the ships sailed before this wind, and Ulysses grew so eager that he would let no one else touch the helm, but held it himself, day and night, to avoid every chance of misfortune. On the tenth night the shores of Ithaca came in sight and the men could see fires upon the hillsides. It was their home. They sailed slowly, waiting for the day, and a deep sleep came upon Ulysses, worn with watching.

But the sailors had not forgotten the ox-hide bag, which they thought was full of gold. While Ulysses slept, they took it from beside him and opened it, letting loose all the winds of heaven in a great tempest. Ulysses awoke and knew what had happened. Overcome with grief, he lay during the whole storm covered with

his mantle. The ships were swept away from the shore, out into the deep and back to the floating island of King Æolus.

Æolus had been kind, but now he refused to do anything more for them, and sternly ordered them to leave. Sadly they rowed away, and came to the land of the Læstrygonians, where the sun never sets. It was a beautiful and fertile land, but it brought terrible woe to Ulysses, for the people were savages and attacked the fleet in such numbers that eleven of the ships and their crews were destroyed. Ulysses and his crew alone escaped. They sailed away in haste, but at last came to a little island with a good harbor. Here they dropped anchor and rested, and gave up two whole days to grief.

On the third day Ulysses sent half of his ship's crew, under Eurylochus, to explore the island. The men had not gone far before they came to a strange and lovely palace. There were tame lions and wolves about the door, and within they

heard sweet singing. The men called, and the shining doors were opened by a woman so beautiful that they knew she was a goddess. She invited them to enter, and all followed her, except Eurylochus, who was suspicious.

Circe, for that was the name of the goddess, led the men into the great hall, and with a show of gracious hospitality, prepared for them what seemed a refreshing drink. But when they had all drunk of it, she touched each of them with her wand, and behold, they all groveled on the ground, and were changed to swine. Her servants drove them away, grunting and squealing, and shut them up in sties, where they wallowed in the mire, not contentedly, like real swine, but in misery, for they still had the minds of men.

Eurylochus waited long for his friends, but at last returned to the ship alone and told Ulysses of their disappearance.

Ulysses, alarmed, set out at once, resolved to find his companions or share

ADVENTURES OF ULYSSES.

their fate. Then, indeed, it might have gone hard with the hero, but that upon the way the god Mercury met him. He warned Ulysses of the danger before him, and, as a protection, gave him a stalk of the plant the gods call Moly. It has a black root and a white blossom, and is very hard to find, but he who has it can never be bewitched.

Ulysses soon came to the palace, where he called aloud. The enchantress threw open the shining doors again, and invited him to enter. Again she mixed the magic drink, and Ulysses drank it off. Then she struck him with her wand, and said, "Go to the sty and grovel with your friends."

But neither the drink nor the wand had its effect. Instead of yielding, Ulysses drew his sword, as if to take her life, and the fair enchantress, trembling, fell at his feet and begged for mercy. Her evil power was at an end. The swine were brought in and she anointed each with a powerful drug. In an instant, the bristles

fell from them and they rose up and became once more Ulysses' men, but younger and fairer and taller than before.

Ulysses and his companions stayed a year on the island of Circe. The enchantress would have had them stay always, but when she saw that Ulysses' thoughts were only of his home and wife and child, she let them go.

She gave Ulysses much advice about the voyage. "But above all," she said, "beware that your men do not lay violent hands on the Oxen of the Sun. If you harm them, I foretell the destruction of the ship and all its crew, though you yourself may escape."

Ulysses and his men set sail, and Circe gave them a fair wind. First, they sailed by the Sirens, who sit at the edge of the sea and sing sweetly to passing voyagers; but whoever hears the song turns his boat to the shore and is slain, for the sweet-voiced Sirens are monsters. Ulysses' men filled their ears with wax, so as to hear nothing.

The hero himself, however, had himself tied to the mast, and so heard them. He struggled hard to get loose, when he heard the sweet voices, but his men bound him only the more firmly until the ship was far beyond the place. Then they passed Scylla and Charybdis, and came to the pleasant island where the Oxen of the Sun graze in the meadows.

"Remember the warning," said Ulysses. "If we harm the oxen, we are ruined."

Storms delayed them on the island a whole month, but no one touched the oxen, though their provisions ran shorter and shorter. At last, however, one day while Ulysses slept, the hungry men took the chance, killed some of the sacred beasts, and made a hearty meal of them. A few days later the weather was fair and the ship sailed. But alas! the wind soon rose and became a hurricane; a thunderbolt struck the ship, and every man aboard was drowned, excepting Ulysses. He clung to a log and escaped their fate.

For nine days he drifted about, but on the tenth he was washed ashore on the Island of Ogygia, where the fair goddess Calypso reigned.

Now, when the goddess saw Ulysses, she loved him, and would not let him leave her land. Year after year she kept him by her, hoping that he would forget his home. She even promised to make him immortal, if he would but be content with her. But every day he went down to the shore and sat looking out across the sea and thinking of Ithaca.

At last, after seven years, the gods took pity on him. Jupiter sent Mercury to Calypso, commanding her to let Ulysses go, and Calypso dared not disobey. There were no ships on the island, but she helped Ulysses build a raft, and brought him provisions for the voyage. Then, drawing the raft down to the sea, he pushed off, and started at last on his way home, for the gods were now favorable. Neptune, it is true, was still angry for the harm done to

Polyphemus, his son, and he shipwrecked Ulysses on the coast of Phæacia; but the Phæacians, when they knew him, received him like a god, for his deeds before Troy were well known to them. They carried him to Ithaca, with honor and with many gifts, in one of their own ships.

Ulysses was fast asleep when the ship reached land, so the Phæacians, unwilling to wake him, lifted him out gently and laid him on the sandy beach, piling up the gifts against an olive tree near by.

Thus, alone and unknown, the sleeping Ulysses reached his native land, after twenty years of absence.

THE SIRENS.

Slow sail'd the weary mariners and saw,
Betwixt the green brink and the running foam,
Sweet faces, rounded arms, and bosoms prest
To little harps of gold; and while they mused,
Whispering to each other half in fear,
Shrill music reach'd them on the middle sea.

"Whither away, whither away, whither away? fly
no more.
Whither away from the high green field, and the
happy blossoming shore?
Day and night to the billow the fountain calls;
Down shower the gamboling waterfalls
From wandering over the lea:
O hither, come hither and furl your sails,
Come hither to me and to me:
Mariner, mariner, furl your sails,
For here are the blissful downs and dales,
And merrily, merrily carol the gales,
Over the islands free;
And the rainbow hangs on the poising wave,
And sweet is the color of cove and cave,
And sweet shall your welcome be:
O listen, listen, your eyes shall glisten
With pleasure and love and jubilee:
Who can light on as happy a shore
All the world o'er, all the world o'er?
Whither away? listen and stay: mariner, mariner,
fly no more."

ALFRED TENNYSON (*Adapted*).

THE HOMECOMING OF ULYSSES.

While Ulysses was wandering about, over unknown lands and seas, things were not going well at his home in Ithaca. His son, Telemachus, was but a child, and the rule of the island fell upon Queen Penelope. She waited patiently, hoping always to see her husband return and take control, for in those days a strong arm was needed at the head of the state. But year after year went by and Ulysses did not return, nor were there any tidings of him.

At last it began to be thought that he was dead. Then Penelope had new

sorrows. She was very wise and queenly and beautiful, and a crowd of evil men, chiefs of Ithaca and the neighboring islands, thronged to her palace, urging her to marry some one of them. And while they wooed her, they treated her palace as though it were their own. Every day there could be heard from her halls a great tumult of revelry and feasting and drunkenness. Penelope could do nothing against all this, and Telemachus was still too young to enforce the respect due her.

For a time the queen would not hear of their offers of marriage. "Ulysses will return," she would answer. But the suitors grew impatient, and at last Antinoüs, the worst of them, came to her and said:—

"Choose one of us and delay no more, for Ulysses is long since dead. Your son, Telemachus, is now almost a man, so long has it been. Consider well, for we all shall remain in the palace until you make the choice."

"Wait but until I finish this robe which I am weaving for Laertes," said Penelope; "then I will choose."

But she did not believe that Ulysses was really dead, and she hated the crowd of evil men who reveled in her halls. Every day she worked at the robe, but at night she unraveled all that she had woven. Thus she put them off for three years more. Then her servants betrayed her, and she was obliged to set about finishing it. She still hoped, for Ulysses might return before the work was done, and all would be well. But though she worked slowly, and with many delays, the robe was finished at last, and there were no tidings of her husband. The suitors now began to urge her anew.

Things had come to this condition when the Phæacians put the sleeping Ulysses ashore and piled up his gifts under the olive tree near him. Minerva, goddess of wisdom and courage, had always kept watch over the hero, and now she shed a

mist over him, so that no one should see him or do him harm.

When Ulysses awoke, he did not at first know where he was, but soon the mist cleared, and with joy he recognized his native hills. Then Minerva appeared to him, and after helping him hide the gifts in a cave near by, told him how much his home had need of him.

"For years these lawless men have been rioting in your palace, and wooing your wife, Penelope, against her will," said Minerva. "Now you must punish them. But in order that you may make your plans in safety, I will disguise you."

She shriveled him up and bowed him down and put a ragged cloak about him, so that he looked like a wretched old beggar.

Then Ulysses left the sea-beach and came unrecognized to the house of the faithful swineherd, Eumæus. The herdsman told him many tales about the suitors.

"These are evil days in my master's land," he said at last.

"Who is your master?" asked Ulysses.

"Ulysses was my master," said Eumæus; "but, alas, he will never return."

"He will return this very year," said the disguised hero.

"Never," said Eumæus; "and I fear that his good son, Telemachus, will perish, too. He has gone to Pylos for news of his father, and even now the suitors are lying in wait to kill him as he comes back."

But at dawn next day, as Ulysses awoke in the swineherd's house, who should come in but Telemachus himself. The suitors had missed him. When he came into the house, Minerva took off the disguise she had put upon Ulysses, and the hero made himself known. With tears of joy the young man flung his arms about his father's neck.

"Son," said Ulysses, after their greetings were ended, "we have work before

us. You and I must punish these lawless suitors. Go on before me to the palace, and appear among them. They will not dare to lay hands on you openly. I shall come a little later, in the disguise of a beggar; but watch me well, that we may act together."

Next morning Telemachus set out for the palace, as his father commanded. The suitors were beside themselves with rage at the sight of him, but they spoke to him with smooth words, and hid the evil of their hearts.

Then, as they feasted in the palace, Ulysses came and sat down, like a beggar, at the door of the banquet hall.

"Bring the aged man in," said Telemachus.

"No; send him away," said Antinoüs, the most insolent of the suitors. "We want no beggars here."

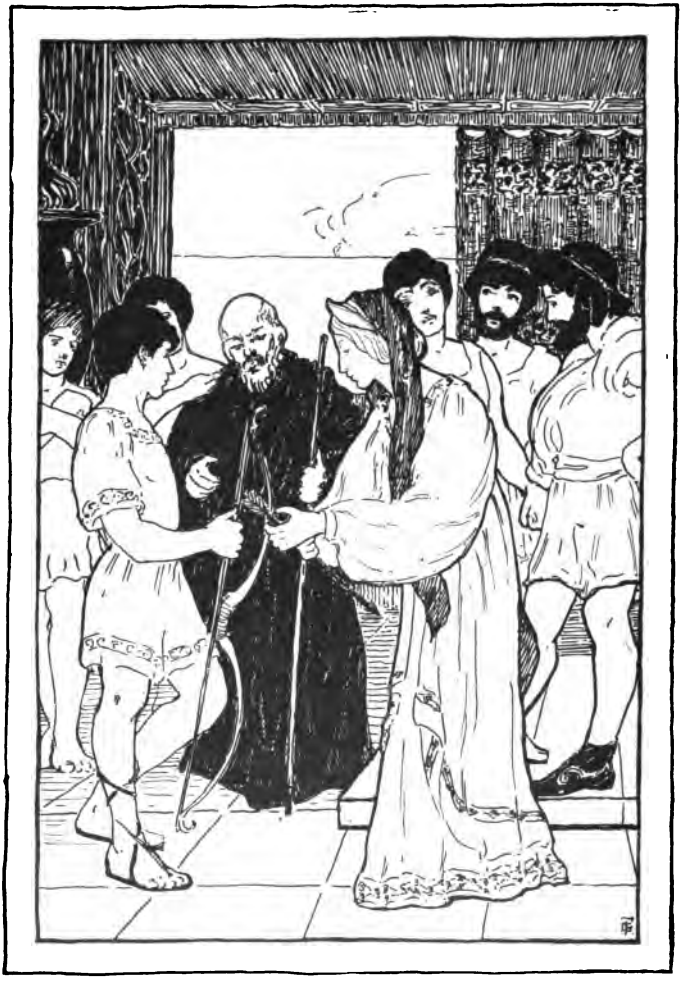
And when Ulysses began to beg round the table, as was the custom in those

days, Antinoüs, in his wrath, seized a heavy stool and flung it at him. It struck him on the shoulder, but though it would almost have felled an ox, Ulysses was not moved by it. He walked quietly on, shaking his head, but curbing his wrath until the proper time should come.

Meantime, Queen Penelope had heard of the wandering beggar's arrival. In the evening, after the suitors had gone to their houses, she came down to the hall with her maids to speak with him.

"Can you not give me tidings of Ulysses?" she asked.

"Indeed, I can," said the hero. "He is still alive, and will soon return. Even now, I believe he is not far from here." He was eager to tell her who he was, but he wished even more to punish the men who had made her miserable; so, because of the talkative maidservants, he told her only invented stories of himself.



HOMECOMING OF ULYSSES.

Long did Penelope listen, and when at last she rose to go, she said:—

"Stranger, your words have touched me deeply. Never has there come to the palace a wanderer who has talked so wisely and well."

Then she went up to her room, and in her sleep she dreamed that Ulysses had returned.

In the morning, the suitors thronged back to the palace, as usual, and began their revels. When Ulysses appeared, they taunted and insulted him, as it was their nature to do.

But before the morning was far spent, Penelope carried out a plan which she had formed. She went up into her husband's armory and got his great bow and carried it down among the suitors. Then twelve rings, each upon a stake, were set up in a row in the palace floor, and she said, "Whoever shall bend this bow of Ulysses' and shoot an arrow through all twelve rings, him I will marry."

Thus she spoke, but she knew that none of them could bend it.

"But if I shall bend it and shoot through the rings," said Telemachus, "no one shall have you."

Telemachus was the first to try. Once, twice, three times, he strove, in vain, to bend the bow and stretch the cord upon it.

Leiodes tried next, but could not bend it in the least. Then Antinoüs had a fire made, and over it he melted some lard with which he rubbed the bow, to make it limber, but even then he could not bend it, nor could any of the other suitors.

"Let me take the bow," said Ulysses.

"Beggar!" cried Antinoüs. "Are you not content to feast here? Will you strive with your betters?"

"Let him take it," said Penelope. "He did not come here to woo me, but if he bend the bow, he shall have a rich prize."

"Leave us, mother," said Telemachus, fearing a quarrel with the suitors. "I shall see that the stranger has fair play."

Penelope heeded her son's words and left the room.

"A fine bowman!" said one of the suitors, scornfully, as he watched Ulysses handling the bow. But Ulysses stretched the string as easily as a minstrel stretches a cord about the peg of a lyre. Then he caught up an arrow, put it to the string, and shot it straight through all the rings.

"The trial is ended," he said. "Now I will aim at another mark," and he sped an arrow at Antinoüs, killing him instantly.

In a moment there was a great uproar. The suitors set upon Ulysses with their swords, but Telemachus rushed to his aid, and the two held them at bay while Ulysses smote them with the swift arrows, sparing none in the room but Phemius, the gentle minstrel, and Medon, the herald,

whom Telemachus loved. It was a long, hard fight. After it was over, Ulysses ordered the servants to put the hall in order and to tell Penelope the news, for by this time all had recognized him.

When every sign of the dreadful conflict had been removed, Euryclea, the aged nurse, went to bear the tidings to Penelope. She found her asleep.

"Awake, Penelope!" she cried. "Ulysses has come. With his own hand he has slain the suitors. Come and see him yourself."

Penelope arose and followed her to the hall. There was Ulysses, seated by a pillar. Penelope looked at him long in silence. She could not believe that it was he.

"Son," said Ulysses, "let us leave her to her own thoughts for a while. She will know me when I have put off these rags."

They went out, and Minerva took off the disguise that was upon Ulysses, and

shed great beauty on him, making him tall and strong like the gods.

When he came in, he spoke to Penelope of a thing long past. Then she knew him. She ran to him and put her arms about him and shed tears of joy.

Thus the wanderings of Ulysses and the long, patient waiting of Penelope came to an end.

THE LOTUS-EATERS.

"Courage!" he said, and pointed toward the land,
"This mounting wave will roll us shoreward soon."
In the afternoon they came unto a land,
In which it seemed always afternoon.
All round the coast the languid air did swoon,
Breathing like one that hath a weary dream.
Full-faced above the valley stood the moon;
And like a downward smoke, the slender stream
Along the cliff to fall and pause and fall did seem.

Then round about the keel with faces pale,
The mild-eyed melancholy Lotus-eaters came.

Branches they bore of that enchanted stem,
Laden with flower and fruit, whereof they gave
To each, but whoso did receive of them,
And taste, to him the gushing of the wave
Far far away did seem to mourn and rave
On alien shores; and if his fellow spake,
His voice was thin, as voices from the grave;
And deep-asleep he seem'd, yet all awake,
And music in his ears his beating heart did make.

They sat them down upon the yellow sand,
Between the sun and moon upon the shore;
And sweet it was to dream of Father-land,
Of child, and wife, and slave; but evermore
Most weary seem'd the sea, weary the oar,
Weary the wandering fields of barren foam.
Then some one said, "We will return no more":
And all at once they sang, "Our island home
Is far beyond the wave; we will no longer roam."

ALFRED TENNYSON (*Adapted*).

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MT. HEL'ICON. Sacred mountain in Bœotia; the home of the Muses. Here Hercules got his club, 85.

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PAN. God of woods and fields and flocks. Had hoofs and horns and furry ears, 26.

PANDO'RA. A woman given by Jupiter to Epimetheus and to mankind, 47–48.

PAR'IS. Son of King Priam of Troy. As an infant, was cast forth to die upon Mt. Ida; grew up, however, among the shepherds there, 71; fairest of men; was called upon to judge who should have the golden apple intended "for the fairest," 172; carried off Helen to Troy, 177, and brought destruction upon that city, 211.

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PEG'ASUS. A winged horse, associated by modern poets with the Muses, 123.

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PE'LIAS (pe'li-as). King of Iolcus; father of Alcestis, 98.

PENEL'OPE (pe-nel'o-pe). Wife of Ulysses. Famous for her fidelity. Persecuted by suitors, she remained faithful to Ulysses, who was absent from home twenty years and supposed to be dead, 235, 236. She put off the suitors by the stratagem of the robe for Laertes, 237.

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PER'SEUS (per'suse). Son of Danaë. As an infant, was cast adrift upon the sea with his mother in a small boat; rescued by Dictys, 126; sent by Polydectes to obtain the head of Medusa, 128; was helped by Minerva, 130, to whom he afterward gave the head, 144. Adventure with

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PHA'ETON. Son of Helios and Clymene, 112. Attempted to drive the chariot of the sun, 117; lost control of the horses, 118, and was destroyed by the thunderbolt of Jupiter, 122.

PHE'MIUS. Minstrel in the house of Ulysses, 245.

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POL'LUX, 181. (See Castor).

POLYDEC'TES (pol-y-dec'teez). King of the island of Seriphus, who for a time cared for Danaë and Perseus, but afterward persecuted Danaë, and intrigued against Perseus, 127-128; was turned to stone by the Gorgon's head in the hands of Perseus, 144.

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POSEI'DON, 169. (See Neptune).

PRI'AM. King of Troy; father of Hector and Cassandra; slain at the taking of Troy, 211.

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PROSER'PINA, (pro-ser'pi-na). Called by the Greeks Persephone, 36. Daughter of Ceres, 15; wife of Pluto, who carried her off by force, 17, thus incurring the wrath of Ceres, 24. In the end, Pluto was compelled to allow Proserpina to spend part of each year with her mother, 34-35.

PROTESILA'US. First Greek to die in the Trojan war, 179.

PYANEP'SION. Festival in honor of Apollo, 167.

PYGMA'LION. Sculptor, 111 (note).

PY'LOS. A town of Sparta ruled by Nestor, the aged and wise warrior, 176.

PYR'RUS, or NEOPTOL'EMUS. Son of Achilles. Grecian warrior against Troy, 210.

PYTHON. A monstrous serpent that was slain by Apollo, 58.

SCYL'LA, 231. Monster with six heads on long necks. She was opposite Charybdis in the narrow strait between Sicily and Italy. If mariners avoided Scylla, they fell unawares into the jaws of Charybdis.

SER'IPHUS. Island east and south of Greece, 125. Here Perseus and his mother were found on the beach by Dictys.

SICIL'IAN. Pertaining to Sicily, 36.

SI'NON. A Greek spy, left behind with the wooden horse when the army pretended to sail away, 205.

SI'RENS. Nymphs who, with their songs, enticed mariners ashore and then slew them. 230, 233.

SPAR'TA. Kingdom of Greece, ruled by Menelaus; home of Helen, 176.

STYX. River of the lower world, 20. It flowed seven times round Hades. All spirits must be carried across it by the ferryman Charon, 21, 69.

TÆN'ARUS. Promontory at the southern point of Greece, 68.

TELEM'ACHUS (te-lem'a-kus). Son of Ulysses, 216, 235.

THE'SEUS (the'suse). Son of Ægeus, king of Athens, and of Æthra, princess of Trœzen, 146; possessed of wonderful strength, 147; slew Procrustes, 151; reached Athens and was recognized by his father, 154; went to Crete on the black ship, 158; aided by Ariadne, slew the Minotaur, 165; carried off Ariadne as his wife, 166; lost her, or deserted her, at Naxos, 168.

THES'ALY. A kingdom of Greece, ruled by Admetus, 97, and later by Peleus, the father of Achilles, 170.

THE'TIS. A sea-nymph; wife of Peleus, 170; mother of Achilles, 182.

THRACE. Country n.w. of Greece. Home of Orpheus, 65, and of Diomed, who owned the man-eating horses, 104.

TIRE'SIAS (ti-re'zhi-us). An aged seer. Predicted the future of Hercules, 80.

TI'TANS. Sons of the goddess Earth, 41; fought with the gods and tried to force away into Olympus, 42; the greatest of them was Prometheus.

TRŒ'ZEN. A kingdom of Greece; home of Æthra, the mother of Theseus, 146.

TROY, or IL'IUM. A city and country of Asia, ruled by Priam, 171; the retreat of Paris with Helen, 177; laid waste and destroyed by the Grecian army under Agamemnon, 211.

ULYS'SES. The wise warrior of the Greeks before Troy, 179, 186; afterward had many adventures, 216-233; returned home and slew the suitors, 245.

UN'DERWORLD, or HA'DES. The kingdom of Pluto, and the place of all departed spirits, 30, 38; the river Styx surrounded it, and Cerberus guarded the entrance, 69.

VE'NUS. Called by the Greeks Aphrodite, 111 (note); daughter of Jupiter. Goddess of love and beauty, 47, 166; mother of Cupid, 64; received from Paris the golden apple intended "for the fairest," 176; rewarded Paris by giving him Helen, 177; helped Troy in the Trojan war.

VUL'CAN. Called by the Greeks Hephæstus. Son of Jupiter. The lame workman and genius of the gods; made Pandora and the wonderful box, 47; made the armor of Achilles, 193.